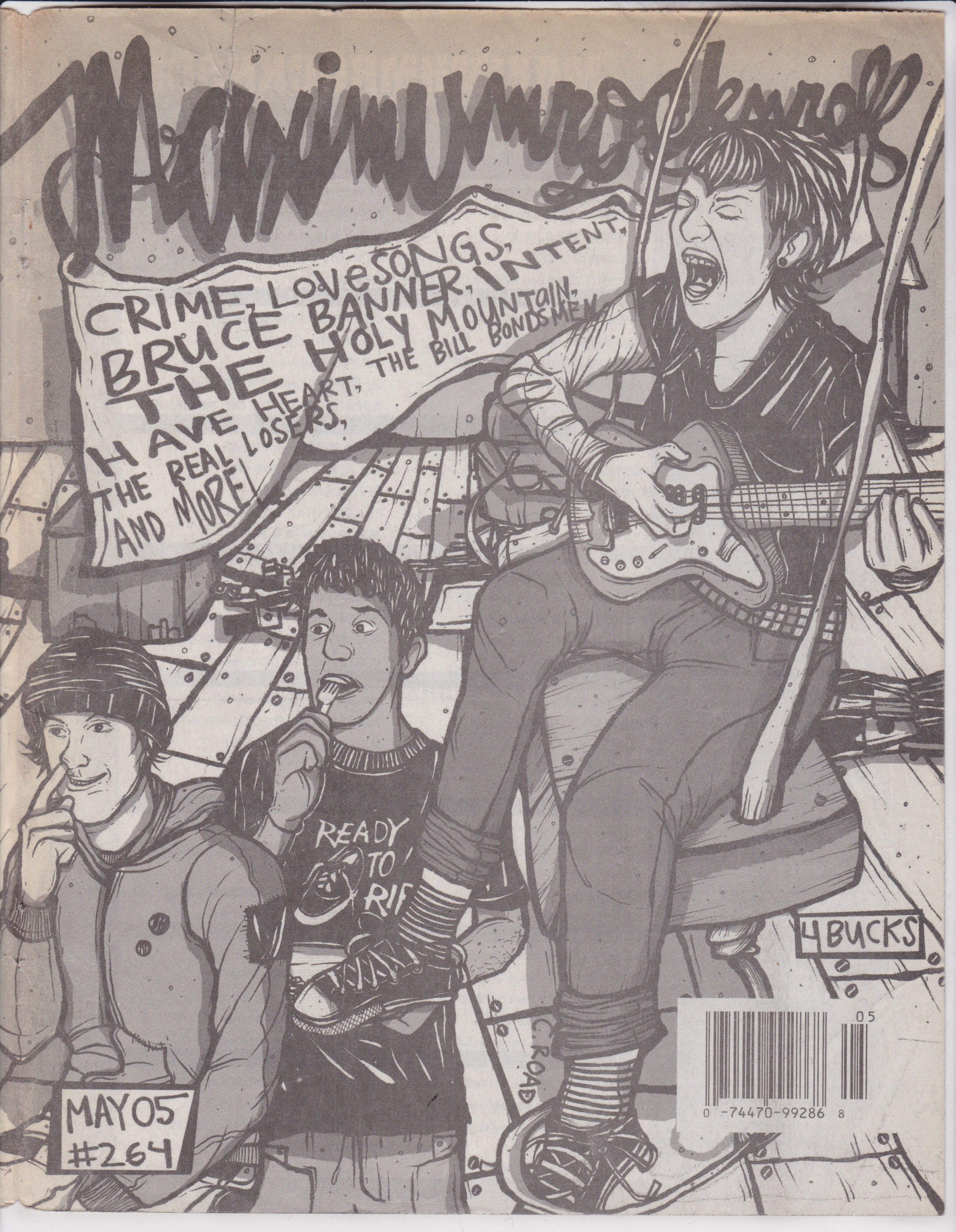
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TOP 10

For what it's worth, here's some of the MRR crew's current Top 10 (or so) lists of stuff we've reviewed this month.

TIM BROOKS

FUCKED UP-Generation-EP	A-LINES-You Can Touch-LP
CAREER SUICIDE-Signals-EP	WIPERS-Complete Rarities78-90-LP
SS DECONTROL-LP&12"	WOLFPACK-Mist of Morpheus-45
OFFENDERS-LP&EP	MIDNIGHT EVILS-Breakin' It Down-CD
SNAKEBITE-Every Bad Idea Is a Good Idea-EP	FUCKED UP-live

MITCH CARDWELL

OFFENSIVE HERBST 87-2xLP	CAREER SUICIDE-Signals-EP
A-LINES-You Can Touch-LP	THE HEART ATTACKS-LP
DUTCH MASTERS-Radioactive-EP	VOLT-Sex Five Nun-LP
LAMPS-LP	DC SNIPERS/SHOPFRONTS-split EP
SS DECONTROL-LP&12"	JOHNNY VOMIT & THE DRY HEAVES-EP

BOB COONS

DISFEAR-A Brutal Sight of War-10"	BASTARDS-Demos 1982-LP
FUCKED UP-Generation-EP	THE HEART ATTACKS-LP
KLIMAX-84-85-LP	OFFENDERS-LP&EP
CAREER SUICIDE-Signals-EP	SS DECONTROL-LP&12"
IRON LUNG/SHANK-split LP	JBA/REAGAN SS-live

PAUL CURRAN

A-LINES-You Can Touch-LP	OFFENDERS-LP&EP
SS DECONTROL-Get It Away-12"	NO FX-Insulted By Germans-45
FUCKED UP-Generation-EP	HANNA HIRSCH-Fireworks in Daylight-EP
KLIMAX-84-85-LP / WIPERS-lp	FUCKED UP-live / OBSERVERS-live
CAREER SUICIDE-Signals-EP	VOETSEK/BORN DEAD-live

JONATHAN FLOYD

VOLT-Sex Five Nun-LP	V/A-Belt Fighting the Man-DVD
DUTCH MASTERS-Radioactive-EP	WESTERN DARK/BRUTAL KNIGHTS-split EP
A-LINES-You Can Touch-LP	SUNPOWER-John Terror-EP
MIDNIGHT EVILS-Breakin' It Down-CD	THE HEART ATTACKS-LP
FUCKED UP-Generation-EP	THE BRIEFS-live

JEFF HEERMANN

MANIKINS-Agalmatophilia-CD	JOHNNY VOMIT & THE DRY HEAVES-EP
A-LINES-You Can Touch-LP	BLACK DAHLIAS-Wednesday Night-EP
A-LINES-One Day/Heidi's Head-45	TAR BABIES-CD
FEVERS-Love Always Wins-CD	GAY COWBOYS IN BONDAGE-CD
VOLT-Sex Five Nun-LP	MIDNIGHT EVILS-Breakin' It Down-CD

KENNY KAOS

THE REVLONS-The Searcher-EP	RADIO REELERS-Runnin' Out-EP
A-LINES-You Can Touch-LP	DIVEBOMB HONEY-Get Up-EP
WIPERS-Complete Rarities 78-90-LP	THE MONEYCHANGERS-EP
THE HEART ATTACKS-LP	NO FX-Insulted By Germans-45
THE PROJECTILES-Hanging Out-LP	DUTCH MASTERS-Radioactive-EP

CAROLYN KEDDY

JOHNNY VOMIT & THE DRY HEAVES-EP	ARCH HALL JR. & THE ARCHERS-CD
DUTCH MASTERS-Radioactive-EP	CAREER SUICIDE-Signals-EP
CANDY SNATCHERS-Ugly on the Outside-CD	DC SNIPERS/SHOPFRONTS-split EP
VOLT-Sex Five Nun-LP	THE MONEYCHANGERS-EP
LAMPS-LP / A-LINES-LP&EP	Nomi Songs-film / Inside Deep Throat-film

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

TOP 10

Please send us records (2 copies of vinyl, if possible– one for MRR and one for reviewer), or CD-only releases. See reviews section for where to send tapes & CD-Rs.

RAY LUJAN

- FASTLANE-CD / THE KNOW HOW-CD
- THE BLOCKED-Smash Hits-CD
- DIVEBOMB HONEY-Get Up-EP
- THE HEART ATTACKS-LP
- JABBERJAW-Bad Year-CD
- A-LINES-LP / STATUES-Aux.-CD
- V/A-Belt Fighting the Man-DVD
- V/A-Vancouver Complication-CD
- PINK LINCOLNS-Background Check-CD
- THE EVENS-live

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

- FUCKED UP-EP / CARRER SUICIDE-EP
- THE PARTISANS-Idiot Nation-LP
- TAR BABIES-CD / THE HEART ATTACKS-LP
- V/A-California Thrash Demolition-CD
- SAFE INSIDE-The Anthem-EP
- HANNA HIRSCH-EP / A-LINES-LP
- WESTERN DARK/BRUTAL KNIGHTS-split EP
- FLORENCE NIGHTINGALES-Nightingales-EP
- IRON LUNG/SHANK-split LP
- JBA/REAGAN SS/FUCKED UP/BRUTAL KNIGHTS-live

GOLNAR NIKPOUR

- A-LINES-You Can Touch-LP
- CAREER SUICIDE-Signals-EP
- BASTARDS-Demos 1982-LP
- REVLONS-The Searcher-EP
- VÄÄRINKASITYS-Sota-Äpärät-LP
- WIPERS-Complete Rarities 78-90-LP
- WOLFPACK-Mist of Morpheus-45
- KLIMAX-84-85-LP
- SS DECONTROL-Get It Away-12"
- OBSERVERS-live

DONNA POOLE

- FUCKED UP-Generation-EP
- SUNPOWER-John Terror-EP
- DIVEBOMB HONEY-Get Up-EP
- FLORENCE NIGHTINGALES-Nightingales-EP
- CAREER SUICIDE-Signals-EP
- BLACK DAHLIAS-Wednesday Night-EP
- THE PARTISANS-Idiot Nation-LP
- VÄÄRINKASITYS-Sota-Äpärät-LP
- KLIMAX-84-85-LP
- WIPERS-Complete Rarities 78-90-LP

WILL RISK

- WIPERS-Complete Rarities 78-90-LP
- FUCKED UP-Generation-EP
- HANNA HIRSCH-Fireworks in Daylight-EP
- BLEEDING HICKEYS-EP
- IRON LUNG/SHANK-split LP
- NO FX-Insulted By Germans-45
- CAREER SUICIDE-Signals-EP
- A-LINES-You Can Touch-LP
- THE PARTISANS-Idiot Nation-LP
- LAMPS-LP

BRUCE ROEHRS

- FUCKED UP-Generation-EP
- RETCHING RED-Get Your Wings-CD
- RANCID VAT-CD
- DISFEAR-A Brutal Sight of War-10"
- CAREER SUICIDE-Signals-EP
- WOLFPACK-EP / RATTUS-CD
- SLICKS-Household Remedy-EP
- CANDY SNATCHERS-Ugly on the Outside-CD
- KLIMAX-84-85-LP
- SAFE INSIDE-The Anthem-EP

RYAN WELLS

- VOLT-Sex Five Nun-LP
- OFFENSIVE HERBST 87-2xLP
- A-LINES-LP&EP
- DC SNIPERS/SHOPFRONTS-split EP
- WIPERS-Complete Rarities 78-90-LP
- LAMPS-LP
- DUTCH MASTERS-Radioactive-EP
- FEVERS-New?-CD
- FUCKED UP-Generation-EP
- THE HEART ATTACKS-LP

ZINE TOP TEN

- Dig It #33
- Equalizing Distort Vol. 4 #7
- IPRC Audio Zine #1
- Morgenmuffel #13
- The Rise and the Fall #3
- Sal Si Puedes #3
- Tord-Boyan #1
- Zine World #22
- Broken Hipster #2
- Rancid News #9

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#148/Sept '95. Soda Jerks, Toe Rag, Thorazine, Sacred Straight, Wizo, Opposition Party, Moody Jackson, Adversives, Opcion Crucial, Rebel, Rebel, Teen Idols, Walking Ruins.

#150/Nov '95. NY Loose, Snap-Her, Sick Boys, Splatterheads, Pipe, Pregnant Man, Final Conflict, Rawness, Stink, Goblins, Smellie Fingers.

#151/Dec '95. Lowdowns, My White Bread Mom, Queen B's, Electric Frankenstein, Turtlehead, Serpico, Trick Babys, In/Humanity, Stains, Varukers, Pist, Terrible Virtue.

#153/Feb '96. Snort, Hatchetface, Little Ugly Girls, ADZ, Oxymoron, NOTA, Stun Guns, Surfin' Turnips, Gutfiddle, Karen Monster, Dimestore Haloes.

#154/Mar '96. Motards, Subincision, Stisism, Donnas, Stallions, Count Backwards.

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#160/Sept '96. Automatics, Boycot, Toast, Morning Shakes, Mormons, John Q. Public, Sex Offenders, Ballgagger, Business, Apocalypse Babys, Good Riddance.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#162/Nov '96. Phantom Surfers, Candy Snatchers, the Stain, National Guard, Torches To Rome, Restos Fosiles, Two Bo's Maniacs, Snuka, Redemtion 87, Torture Kitty.

#163/Dec '96. Last Sons of Krypton, Prostitutes, Wig Hat, Boys, Let It Rock, Enemy Soil, Vulcaneers, Half Empty, Zeros, Deadcats, Teen Idles.

#166/Mar '97. Walking Abortions, Hickey, '77 Spreads, Sanity Assassins, Cards In Spokes, Joey Tampon & The Toxic Shocks, Adjective Noun, Suicide King, Lenguas Armadas, Trauma, De Crew.

#172/Sept '97. Withdrawals, Judgement, No Motiv, Oppressed Logic, Truents, Left For Dead, Yellowskin, Weird Lovemakers, Smash Your Face, Flatus, Straight Faced, Klaxon, X-It.

#174/Nov '97. Stratford Mercenaries, Lickity Split, Bladder, Piss Shivers, Barnhills, In/Humanity, Education theme issue.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, DDI, Bonecrusher, Normals, All Bets Off, Stiletto Boys, Summerjack, Cell Block 5.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Ümlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#185/Oct '98. Traitors, Wimpy Dicks, Armed & Hammered, Dylan McKays, NME, Tezacrifco, Worm, Roswells, Raxola, Beatnik Termites.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, Third Party, No Class, Skabs.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres..

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#198/Nov '99. Hail Mary, Pressure Point, Bump 'N Uglies, The Victims, A//Political, Outlast

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Aaron Cometbus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR catalogue #100-200.

#201/Feb '00. Beerzone, Towards An End, Daybreak, "Best Punk Singles of the '90s," the WTO riots in Seattle.

#202/March '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, Gore Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#203/April '00. Spazz, Slang, *Slug & Lettuce* zine, *Suburban Voice* zine, As We Once Were, Red Angel Dragnet, Four Letter Words, Slampt Records, the Wednesdays, the Fuses.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#205/June '00. Punks With Kids special. Skudz, 50 Million, Legion, Wilbur Cobb, Coalition.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#216/May '01. Propagandhi, Angelic Upstarts, Discordance Axis, Ruination, Photographer: Chris Boarts, Strap-Ons, Lynnards Innards

#217/June '01. Joey Ramone R.I.P., Tear It Up, Skitsystem, The Pattern, CrimethInc., Esperanza, The Chicago Blackout, Photographer: Ace

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#219/Aug '01. "Fix It!" cycling article, Crucial Unit, Lost Sounds, Lombardies, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 1, Casualties, Resinators, *P.U.N.K.*, Slaughter & the Dogs, Anti-Flag, Dontcares, S'Bitch.

#220/Sep '01. Latin American Issue. Aubuso Sonoro, Anti-Todo, Fuerza X, Apatia No, Manganzoids, Demencia, Sick Terror, Tocatta y Bulla, NTN, Argies, Reconcile, Anti-Korpus, Ruido De Odio, Los Pepiniyos, Rebelion Disidente, Brazil Scum , Kim Bae Photo Essay.

#221/Oct '01. Tales from the G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 2, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene report, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11," Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#226/Mar '02. Queer punk special issue. Vaseline, Quails, Skinjobs, Italian queer punk report, Vaginal Davis, Feelings on a Grid, Sissies, Scott Free, Dumba, Columns.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#232/Sept '02. "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

#233/Oct '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235/Dec '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Anti-war guest columns. Anti-war scene reports. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, *Artcore*, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#237/Feb '03. Top Ten Records of 2002, "Music as a Weapon: Artists in Wartime," Dirt Bike Annie, Let It Burn, Stockyard Stoics, King Khan & Shrines, 625 Records, Feast Or Famine, Rudimentary Peni, Coachwhips, Self Defense.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola and San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, *Snakepit* zine, Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, *Trust* zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#248/Jan '04. Discharge, Superhelicopter, Jed Whitey, Black Friday '29, Find Him And Kill Him, The Lids, Impratical Cockpit, Face Up To It, History Of Maximum Rocknroll Radio.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/Mar '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl,Vrah.

#252/May '04. Fucked Up, Firestarter, Inepsy, Laukaus, Great Clearing Off, Radio Reelers, Extreme Noise Records, 46 Short, The State, John The Baker, Free Verse, Chrystaei Branchaw photos.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Võetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, Portland, Boston, Germany.

#255/Aug '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/Sep '04. The Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04 The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, The Boss Martians, Reactionary Three, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, The Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, AI, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, "Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

262/March '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scene report

263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

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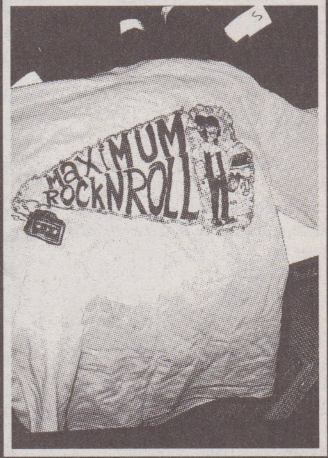

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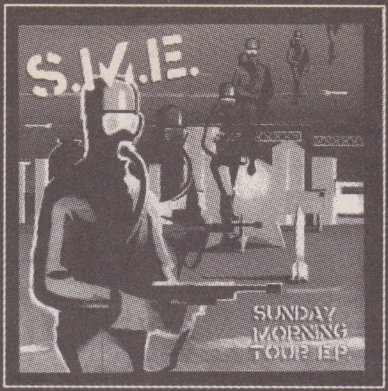

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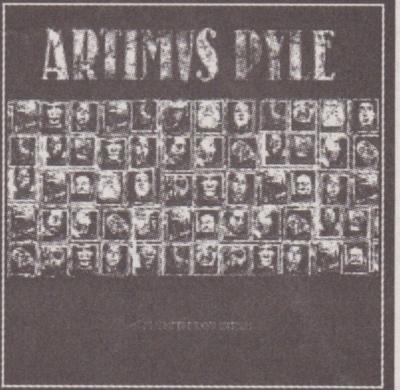

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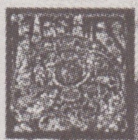

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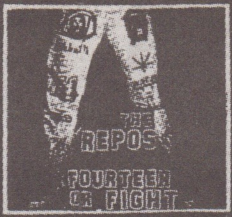

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LETTERS

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MRR—

I'm writing because we need the help of your readers. As you may or may not be aware, the National Roads Authority is planning to build a tolled motorway (it will be tolled twice, money goes to a private company) through the Tara-Skryne Valley. This is the most revered archaeological site in the country; the area is full of structures of ancient paganism and played a central part in the saga of St. Patrick. It is 6000 years old outdating the pyramids. The Save the Tara-Skyrne Valley Campaign has produced a list of approximately 3000 signatures of people in opposition to the proposed motorway, but I feel this isn't sufficient. So if you feel this is an outrage and / or have Irish heritage or just want to do something useful, please send a letter to:

Ah Taaseach Bertie Ahern, Dail Eireann, Dublin 2 Ireland *or* Mortin Cullen, Minister for Transport, 44 Kildare Street, Dublin 2 Ireland

—Thank you for your time and support.
Adam Carrell

MRR—

Ben Ditch's "review" of *Tones & Notes #2*, in MRR #261, told almost nothing about *Tones & Notes* but revealed something about Ben Ditch. Ben seems to detest "geeks"—a "geek" being anyone who thinks about something that doesn't interest him.

Ben did offer one bit of advice: "Next time, don't tape the edges of your zine together and use it as an envelope." Well, many zines do that because that provides more content per postage, though at the risk of the cover getting messed up. Our cover, however, was not *Tones & Notes*, but rather a catalog of various zines.

I offer this bit of advice to Ben. When you review a zine, even if *you* don't like the zine, do tell readers what the zine is about, because (incredible as this may seem to you) everyone does not share your distastes. In *Tones & Notes #2*, some headlines are: "Zyxy Waltz – An Exploration of Chording"; "Critique of Chord Easy" (our 40-page, $3 booklet); "What is Wrong with Traditional Graphic Music Notation?" and "Comments About Various Music Notation Systems" (and two songs written using a simplified system).

Price of *Tones & Notes* is $1 or trade.

—Bert, Dwelling Portably, POB 190-TNMR, Philomath, OR 97370.

MRR—

Are you aware we have turned into consumer zombies? I'm talking about the straight world. As I ride my bike to get a large coffee or Moutain Dew, I observe people in their sports cars and SUVs frowning. What do these robots get out of being here? They've become complacent and obsessed with acquiring a lifestyle they can't live. I do everything I can do to make mine and others' better. I smile, realize people are people, and help out others and the environment. It never hurts to be nice. It comes back to you. Sometimes. To all those punks, free thinkers, remember people judge on the outside. What are you using your image for, if it's not for good and equality? You are just buying into a fad. Jumping on a bandwagon. Getting stoned and wasting time in your parents' condo. Nuff said! Peace!

—John Kurtti

Thine MRR and Thou Punks—

I just got word from my previous Tusconian roommate that I received a letter from Portland from a long fucking time ago, but that it was lost. What kinda shit is that!? I depend on the letters and phone calls I have been receiving to remind me I am not alone, and, unusually for me, I have—however slowly—been responding to them all. Most heart warming have been the late night, hilarious drunk-as-fuck calls from Asheville, NS. So, yeah, if you wrote me from Portland, please write again to my new address. Ya.

Anyhow, all is fine, I guess, down up in Arizona. Boring. Reading much science fiction and comparative religion. Listening to much Post-Regiment, Tori Amos, and anything with Ivy or Iggy on it.

I'm deciding where to move on from here and it's come down to three choices: Brooklyn, Seattle, or Austin. I think that I am leaning towards Austin, but think that some Seattle-ians should convince me otherwise. And Brooklyn...

Sometimes I consider moving to Los Angeles, but sometimes I am really fucking stupid. All right then.

—Cactus and dry heat,
Jake Filth
3201 E. Pima, Rear House
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(520) 326-5666

Dear Maxi Rocker—

Hey yo! This is Karl Bakla from Las Vegas. Well I just got home from work & I saw the funniest thing. Yes! I saw a gang of straight edgers playing black jack. So let me make sure I have this right, it's bad to drink, but gambling is OK. Fuck these kids. Casinos & bars are safe havens for alcoholics. You don't see us going into your Mormon (or should I say Moron) temples or Salt Lake City, you motherfucking straight edgers! Next time I see you little fuckers gambling, I'm gonna hit up Ellis Island's bar, fuck your mom, become your step dad, & throw all your shitty little "X" swatches, sweat shirts, & crappy collectors editions of Revelation records away. Yes, this may seem harsh but I hate you, and you need to be disciplined! Also, when I become your step dad, I will talk shit about your real dad & tell you things like he couldn't satisfy your mom the way a real man such as myself can. Back to gambling...maybe it's because I've worked in casinos for over ten years & from what I see all the reasons you little straight edge kids have to hate

drinkers apply to the reasons why people gamble—loneliness, boredom, depression. I could get more in depth with this topic, but that might lead to a semi-intelligent writing, which I don't want to be known for. I'm not gonna ruin my image on a group of eyeliner wearing pussies, who hate me for drinking, but will ultimately end up joining me at the Cooler Lounge when they turn 21 for a dozen or so Coors Lights.

By the time all you fine readers of *MRR* read this, the Punk Rock Bowling Tournament will be over & done in Las Vegas. I will not be taking part in Poser Rock Bowling, because I am punk. So, you're asking, why *isn't* this event punk? Well, for one thing you probably like AFI & Good Charlotte, or quite possibly you were in a crappy NOFX cover band in the early 90s, so you wouldn't understand anyways. What is a punk rock alternative to Punk Rock Bowling in Las Vegas? I'm so glad you asked! This is what might have been done on Koval till we were all forced out of our apartments so that motherfucker Michael Jordan could build an over priced, high rise condo that Las Vegas natives can't afford to live in. Keep in mind, I have a Koval Lane tattoo to remind myself of the good old days when Koval was ghetto. In five or so years this tattoo will be like having a "Rodeo Drive" tattoo, or a tattoo that says *H2O is Hard Core.*

Well, back to what the Koval Lane crew would do instead of "Punk Rock" bowling. First, we would make fake flyers featuring such bands as My Blood Bleeds Blood Red from Orange County, from Salt Lake City As I lay With A High Fever, & crowd favorites XthisthingthatwedoX. We would then leave these flyers at Sub-Skates & give the rest of the flyers to Las Vegas Valley's own Jack Osbourne look-a-like. ***By the way I'm drunk so I will tell you this mid story...I'm listening to the Bob Mould song *See A Little Light* & I don't care if this doesn't sound like Battalions Of Saints. It's still OK to listen to, because Bob Mould was once in Hüsker Dü & played guitar on Hedwig & The Angry Inch, so all you readers go fuck yourselves!*** Anyway, we could only hope that a gang of straight edge kids would actually buy into the flyer, and show up to this "great hard core show," where they would be ambushed by me & my extensive amount of loser friends. Earlier in the day, before the "fake" hardcore kids get out from high school my buddies & I would prepare for the occasion by hitting up Lee's liquor store to purchase a bottle of Wild Turkey, several cases of Coors Light, and Guinness for the punks from Guam. We would sit & drink, waiting for the straight edge kids to show up & when they finally did we would be ready to kick their ass. So we relax, have a few dozen beers & wait for the straight edge scum to arrive. The straight edge kids take a little longer to show up than we expect, so we drink a little more, or should I say a lot more and listen to Adrenaline OD. When the straight kids show up they would see no hardcore show, but instead, us, the Koval LN Crew & the Axis Of Evil (AKA south side Koval). We could barely walk at this point let alone fight, but we sure can talk a lot of shit. I go for the Wesley Willis talking shit technique where I say, "straight edgers can suck a cabbies ass & fuck off!" Danny Hatefuck would say "straight edge will never be tolerated in my town, not Danny Hatefucks town," & Bryan will tell them about how when he was part of the hardcore scene in Germany he once smoked crack but it wasn't called crack yet, it was called freebasing rock cocaine (I'm not fibbing he really has told me this). At this point the straight edge kids would charge at us & we would be so drunk we'd laugh in disbelief & fall off the car hoods laughing. While we lay on the ground these kids would kick our asses & since this isn't a real show there would be no one to stop the bloodshed these kids were inflicting on us old farts. When my friends & I are finally released from the hospital our girlfriends & wives will probably ground us from being punk for a few weeks.

This would be tough for us because all week long when we work our shitty jobs the only thing that gets us through the week is knowing we get to be punk with our punk friends when we're not selling our souls to feed our families. We're not like our asshole co-workers who bowl, who don't understand why we still play punk music, & who don't understand why we don't vote Bush. Sure we don't do anything cool like play in famous punk bands, & we don't run huge record labels. We survive the workweek, we play in shitty punk bands nobody cares about, we write crappy zines that get bad reviews in *MRR* (& *Razorcake*) & we have no glamorous reasons to be punk except that this is our lifestyle. While the boys from Brigade who put out the great punk anthem *The Dividing Line*—or should I say Youth Brigade—are bowling & acting like tourists (anyone remember the Freeze classic?), we will be the bellhops, the waiters, the floor people, maids, & front desk agents you shit on. We will be the Casino workers that are spitting in your food (let's not forget about the beverages), going through your suitcases for valuables, &—every casino workers favorite—giving you the wrong directions to the bathroom. You punk rock bowlers invade our town for one weekend & don't give two shits about Las Vegas the rest of the year. I am here to tell you I don't fucking care if you are friends with that pussy Benji or the posers in the band Hazen St. We are not impressed. Wow, you know Fat Mike! I didn't think punk was a celebrity show. Let me play too—the drummer of my band is Punk Rock Mike from Keep On Truckin' & I used to play guitar for Shadowplay for 30 seconds about 13 years ago. Wow this is so punk even I'm a celebrity now.

Enough Punk Rock Bowling crap, the kids (pushing 30 crew) will be skating the Silverado Skate Park drunk, having band practice & will be writing stupid letters to *MRR*. So what did I do instead of go to Punk Rock Bowling? I went to (Palms Casino) The Nine Steak House because my boss DJ Alexander wanted to treat his employees of Second Life Productions to dinner, but do you think I could avoid Punk Rock Bowlers? Hell no! Shit, they were even filming a reality show with Punk Rock Bowlers there, fuck I want to gag! When my boss's six-person bill came and listed over a grand as the total, I couldn't believe it—that would pay for my monthly supply of Coors Light or a day's supply of Angel Dust! But wouldn't you know, when the punk rock bowlers sitting next to us paid out their tab, they didn't even flinch! Phhh...pocket change!

See you in the pit, even though you'll never see me there, because I pay attention to the sign that says "Stage Diving and Moshing is not Permitted."

—Karl Bakla
Las Vegas Hardcore

MRR—

I've been reading for years and I guess I'm finally pissed enough to write. I have been on the fence for year now. I grew up traveling to cities for punk shows and seeing the country by riding trains and hitchhiking. When I turned eighteen, I tried to "grow up" and tried to learn to play the game. The problem was that I knew it was

bullshit and I had to start using lots of drugs in order to number out the part of me that knew I didn't belong in one place, trying to buy enough unnecessary things to look successful in the eyes of my neighbors. I watched my punk friends smile and keep traveling, playing in bands, and living a life I still longed for, while I struggled to work my way into a cubicle in a shitty corporation and pay off my credit cards. I hated my life and I started doing heroin to substitute the feeling of being on the road and meeting up with new people and old friends. I sold out to everything I hated. To make a long story short, now I'm in prison in a nightmare of a justice system with nothing but regret.

When you go to prison, you find out who your real friends are. The only people who write me now, or send me something to read, are punks. I hate the place and situation I find myself in today, but I am grateful in a way for the opportunity to clean up and get in touch with who I really am—a fucking punk rocker.

I'm done with drugs, I'm tired of hiding my tattoos, and I'm ready to get out and start hitting the roads of this country like a big circle pit.

I just want to write to every punk out there and say two things. One—stay true to who you are, because "playing the game" is a cancer to the heart. Two—thank you for everything you are. I'm glad to know that I am still a part of a scene that knows something about what freedom really is.

If you can manage, please send any zines or correspondence. I will read, respond and appreciate it. Thank you.

Stay pissed,
—Taylor Hunt, #61758
S.I.C.I. East
PO Box 8509
Boise, ID 83707

MRR—
This past month, the hardcore punk band Words That Burn survived car jacking with attempted homicide while they were on tour.

On a Thursday Night at approximately 2:30 AM on the way back to my house from St. Cloud, Minnesota, Words That Burn picked up some stranded people on Interstate 94 in St. Paul, Minnesota. A short time later one of the guys they picked up started choking Eric (the driver) nearly to death with a strap while Words That Burn members were unable to stop them due to three other guys being in the car. While members of Words That Burn were struggling with the assailants the van reached an extremely high rate of speed and then slammed into some parked cars. All three members were injured in the accident, but not severely. The people who tried to steal their van were going to kill all three members and they were serious about it. Their van is completely totaled, along with a large portion of band equipment in the van. The four attempted carjackers ran from the van after crashing and disappeared. Surprisingly none of them died on the scene but shed plenty of blood. One was severely injured when a guitar amp smashed into the dudes head. The cops have DNA, fingerprints, the dude's car, and a bunch of other evidence against these people and when caught will be charged with attempted homicide. The members of Words That Burn are pulling through this whole matter and are extremely lucky to be alive. Thanks for your continued support,
—Nick Carroll
PO Box 1421
Eau Claire
Wisconsin 54702-1421

MRR—
Often this past year when I flip through a new issue of *Maximum*, I notice that the ads not only look fuzzy, but outright unintelligible. I know ads are a big problem of our landscape these days, with the detrimental effects it does to young (and aging!) minds. Regardless, it is a way that rare forms of art, expression and information can make it on the pages of your brand of toilet paper. Honestly, your computer layout veneer is a turn off, no matter how much personality is culled into your editing programs. The recent turnover in *Max* staff seemed tempting for me to roll up mah sleeves and help make the good fight, but the idea of living two inches from a liquid sucking screen seems as appealing as an office job in downtown.

Now it's not your fault: the ads get sent to you fucked up, the printer can't give a fuck, or that doing all things on computers is "just the way things are" today. I believe the hope lies in that all the energy and precedence given to high-tech whatever will ultimately give results of lesser quality, while honest, low-tech models still deliver the goods.

Sincerely,
—Robt. Eggplant

Eggplant!

Yes, we know that the ads were looking crappy. We switched printers recently and are now sending them electronic files instead of actual pasted-up pages like we used to. This means that all of the ads that get sent to us in the mail are now being scanned into the computer, and thus come out looking like half-toned photographs—i.e., fuzzy and unintelligible. So we've been encouraging everyone who wants to advertise in this here magazine to send us their ad in an electronic format (see the inside cover for more details). In this case the computer is not the problem, but the solution.

As for the the overall "veneer" of the magazine: sure it looks slick and lifeless next to, say, Absolutely Zippo, *to name a random cut-n-paste-style zine. But I think we've done pretty damn well at keeping a punk fanzine aesthetic despite being "desktop published" (which we have been for 15 years now, more or less).*

You'd be more than welcome to come over and do some some non-computerized shitwork, dude. There's always MRR Radio, mailing days, record shelving, proof reading, cleaning, and the copies of all our old covers to be taped up to the walls. Sometimes there's even pizza... It's all part of the good fight. We'll be expecting you soon.

Thanks, Robert.
—Paul

MRR—
I just wanted to thank you for the favorable review of the One Reason/Defiance, Ohio split in the April issue. It is much appreciated. However, I did want to point out that the mailing address listed was incorrect. So I thought I'd send in a correction just in case anyone is having any problems getting a hold of us. The correct address is Anti-Creative Records, PO Box 1528, Upland CA 91785 (not Apland, CA). Thanks so much! Keep up the good work.
—Jer
Anti-Creative Records

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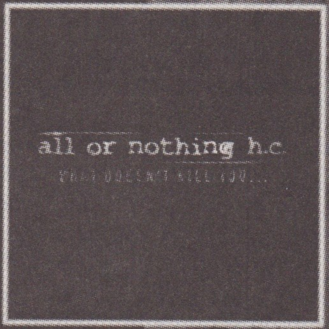

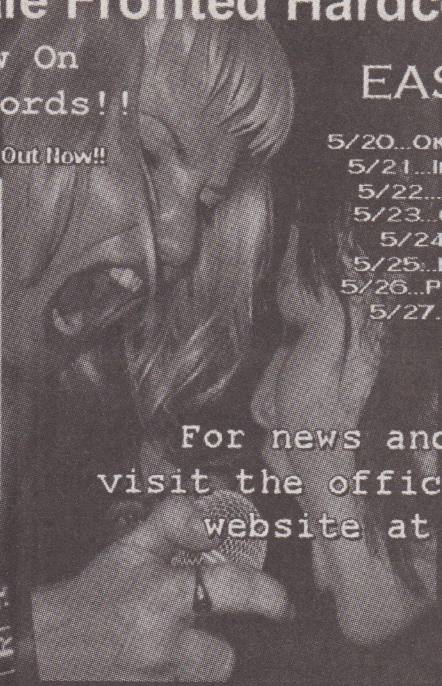

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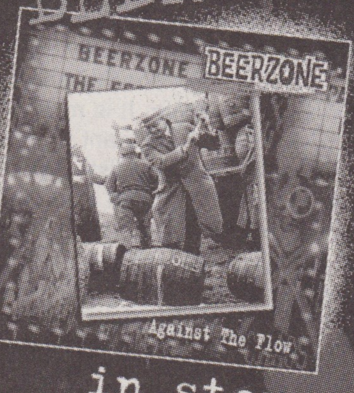

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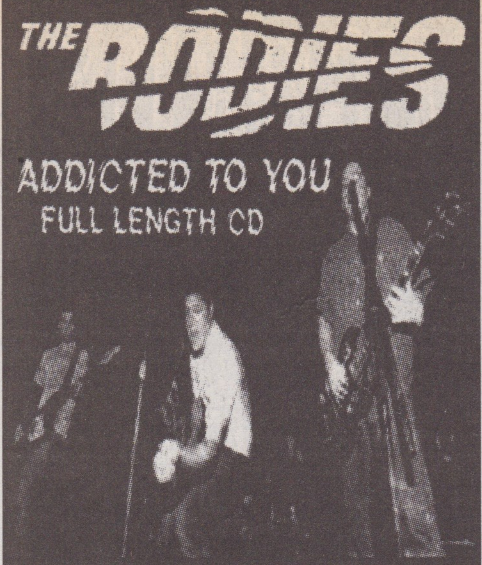

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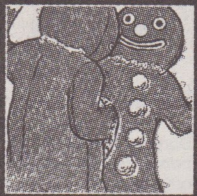

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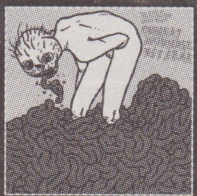

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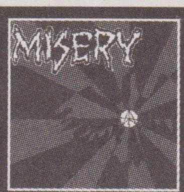

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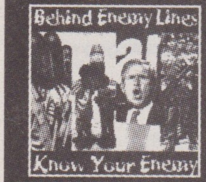

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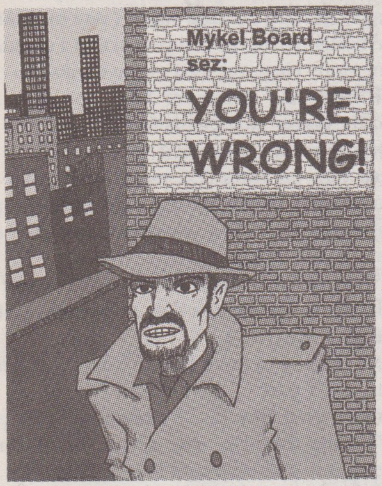


People need to stop thinking about their own bodies and start thinking about other people's.

—J.G. Ballard

[*Note: most of the dialog spoken in the D.R. was in Spanish. Very bad Spanish on my part. As usual, I've translated the very bad Spanish into okay English for your benefit.*]

I'll be more out of place than a liberal at a gun show. My second trip to the Dominican Republic, with no response... no punks... no one to meet me at the airport. What will I do? I begin to worry. It's one of my favorite pastimes. I pick a harmless—even positive—situation and worry about it. Like prune juice, worrying gets me moving.

Things pick up... and down... and back up again. And that's what I'm writing about. Yep another Dominican Story.

But this one is different from the last. Those of you who read more than punkrock, might know that authors talk about two kinds of novels. One is *plot-driven*. In a plot-driven novel, the author plans the action and then creates characters to get from point A to point B. The characters exist to move the plot along.

The other kind of novel is *character-driven*. In a character-driven novel, the author creates characters first, and the personalities and lives of those characters determine the action.

My first trip to the DR was plot-driven. This one is character-driven. So settle down and crank up the speakers— or shut them off. You are about to meet three of the characters whose psychic (or physical) froth flavored this trip. Here's the complete list:

THE METROSEXUAL BIKER
THE WHORE WITHOUT TITS
THE FRENCH GRANDMA
THE SWISS FAMILY WHITE TRASH
THE WHORE WITH TITS
THE SNIFFLING EGYPTIAN
THE MOST BEAUTIFUL BOY IN THE WORLD
RALPH KRAMDEN
THE HAMBURGER MAN

I'm thinking of starting a blog to take up the slack for all the stuff I don't have room for. That would keep me writing instead of doing awful stuff, like washing the dishes or vacuuming. I worry, that I'll slack off anyway... even with the blog.

My last DR trip was punk rock. This time, I tried to contact my punk pals, but my emails languished unanswered. Even my reservation fax to the cheap hotel went un-replied to. That's cause for worry.

I decide to change my priorities. Instead of punk rock, I'll go for baseball, beaches, and beetches. The DR is the number two baseball country in the world. Sammy Sosa, the much-hated Pedro Martinez, and 10% of all major-league players in the US are from the DR. The beaches are calm and warm in the south. Hot and full of waves in the north.

And the beetches? Ah, they don't call it the Callipygian Sea for nothing. Yeah those girls... yowsah! [Note: *They* don't call it the Callipygian Sea at all. I do.]

The good part of this trip begins with my return to Boca Chica. It's a place my trusty *Rough Guide* says, "Is a fine beach during the day, but at night, it's nothing more than a brothel for the gringos." Yeah!

After a bus ride from Santo Domingo, I walk into a cheap Boca Chica hotel.

"Ola amigo! Como estas!"

They recognize me. It's been a year since I last brought my ever-increasingly expensive girl to their fine establishment. (Bathroom in the hall, no seat on the toilet, no AC, a wall a seven-year old could put her fist through.) And still they remember me. Amazing!

"You want the same room as last year?" asks the grandmotherly woman who runs the place.

"Sure!" I tell her. "I'm back for more."

She laughs and asks for my passport. As I stand at the check-in desk, a moto-concho (motorcycle taxi) pulls up outside. From off the back climbs a muscular guy with long hair and a cleanly shaped mustache and beard. He wears a leather cowboy hat. A pouch dangles from his belt. I've met THE METROSEXUAL BIKER.

He walks inside. "This guy told me two hundred pesos," he says to me, jerking a thumb toward the moto-concho driver. "Now he wants an extra hundred. What should I do?"

"I'd just give it to him," I say. "It's not worth the fight. Besides, this is a cool place... and cheap. You'll make up for it."

He nods, walks outside, and pays the guy. Then he checks in, getting the room just down the hall from mine.

"Wanna go for a beer after we get settled?" I ask.

"Sounds good to me," he says. "My name's Thomas. I'm from Vancouver. I do tattoos.

"I'm Mykel," I tell him. "I do anyone who's attractive."

He shakes my hand with a firm grip. The gold rings on his fingers press into my skin. A tattoo sleeve covers his arms from the wrist to where they disappear under his army vest. He's good-looking, I guess, but not attractive. At least not to me.

We sit at the bar in the hotel, a Presidente beer in front of each of us.

"So, Mykel, whaddaya really do?" he asks me with the air of someone who wants you to get through your side of the conversation so you can ask him the same question.

"And you're a tattooist?" I ask, cutting right to the chase. "You do punks? Some of my pals are punks with tattoos."

"I specialize in bikers," he tells me. "Whole body tattoos on bikers. I'm really expensive. Punks can't afford me. I ride a bike too. Got a Harley at home."

"You travel with the bikers?" I ask. He nods.

"All my friends are bikers," he answers. "I travel with my friends."

"You got a pit bull?" I ask.

"Chihuahua," he answers. "That reminds me, I gotta call her today and see how she's taking my absence."

"You call your dog?" I ask.

He nods.

"Hey," I tell him, "it's getting dark. We should get into town. The good ones get taken first."

"Good ones what?" he asks.

"The whole town," I tell him. "It's just one big brothel after sunset. They close the streets to car traffic, put tables out, and you just sit and wait. You don't have to wait long."

"I had no idea," says Thomas. "I just thought this was a beach town close to Santo Domingo. I was planning to buy a house here. Open a bar. But I don't want a whorehouse. You can't get any regular girls. They won't talk with you because they're afraid you'll think they're a whore."

"I keep hearing that," I answer, "but I don't get it. I live in Manhattan. Half the buildings there have doormen. I've never seen a doorwoman... only doormen. Everywhere I go I see doormen. Yet when I see some strange man on the street, I don't automatically assume he's a doorman."

"Doormen have uniforms," he says.

"So do whores," I answer.

"Before we leave," he says, "I want you to get

a picture of me at the bar, with a beer."

He hands me his camera and I take the picture. Then, we head into town. The police have closed off the streets to cars and the tables are out.

We sit at one in the middle of the street. A waitress from the closest bar brings us each a beer. Before I get a swig down my throat, a thin girl comes and sits next to me. She's not bad, a one and a half on the BBS.

[Note: BBS is the *Board Beer Scale*. It's used to rate sexiness. If someone is so attractive that you don't even need one drink to fuck 'em, they rate a zero. That is, zero beers necessary before screwtime. If they're really ugly, it may take a full six-pack before you're drunk enough to do them. In that case, they'd rate a six.]

This girl wears a short bright red skirt that barely covers the good parts. The upper end of her legs attach themselves to two of the main reasons I've come to this island. She wears a tight black tube top that presses her breasts against her chest. I've just met THE WHORE WITHOUT TITS.

"Do you have any children?" she asks me with the air of someone who wants you to get through your side of the conversation so you can ask her the same question.

"Not that I know of," I tell her. "And you?"

"I have a little girl," she says. "She's five and lives in Santo Domingo with her grandmother."

Then she picks up my hand and puts it on her thigh. I push it forward slightly.

"I hope I'm not embarrassing you," I say to Thomas.

"You can't embarrass me," he answers. "I went to Pat Pong in Thailand. I went with my father. The girls shot ping pong balls out of their twats. I caught one in my mouth... in front of Dad. See? You can't embarrass me."

I redden, but can see by the girl's face that she understands none of this.

"But..." Thomas continues, "I'd never fuck someone with kids. I dunno. Maybe it's just me. But I couldn't do it." He shakes his head.

"Thanks," I tell him.

Before long the three of us return to the hotel. The guard at the gate says hello to the girl. She answers with his name. Thomas goes to his room. We go to mine.

I take my bulky wallet out of my pants pocket and put it on the night table. Then I lay on the bed, fully clothed. The girl takes off a ring and necklace and puts them on the night table, next to my wallet. It looks like a sign of trust.

"Here are my valuables," she is saying, "right next to yours."

Another sign of trust. I try to kiss her. She turns her head. I kiss her fingers, her palms, her arms. I had a girlfriend who'd come in her panties when I kissed her palms. I figure all girls like it.

See, it's my goal to make every whore come. When I do that, I feel like I've gone past a simple commercial exchange. I feel like I do when I make a waitress laugh or brighten the day of my local postal workers by bringing them a pizza. I don't want my life to be a series of robotic commercial exchanges. I want humanity in my commercial exchanges.

This girl isn't reacting very much. I slide my body down over hers. I unzip her skirt. I pull it down over her hips. Then I stick my tongue deep into her navel. She jumps like I've shocked her.

I hook my chin over the edge of her pretty pink thong and nudge it downward... kissing the path. Sliding the thong off with one hand, I nestle between her legs. She's shaved completely clean. Her brownness flashes pink.

I press my face deep between her legs. I suck in, relax, work around it. Girls tell me that the key is not to go for the bull's-eye, but to work the edges. There are too many nerves. The pain and pressure can keep things from getting *there*. The key, they say, is to get close, maybe nibble and release, but don't treat it like a blow job. It's more like having your balls sucked. I think I understand. I can't come from a blowjob. I enjoy the lead-up, the thrill and shake, but I can't come that way. Maybe it's the same for girls.

So, I play with her lower lips, letting the saliva loosen, lubricate. I press my tongue into the soft opening, probing and retracting.

"I don't like that," she says. "You got a condom?"

I roll off her and fetch my wallet from the night table. Pulling the condom out of the back compartment, I check the expiration date: 1998. I hand it to her, hoping she won't notice. She doesn't

Then I pull off my shirt and lay on my back. If she thinks I'm gonna completely undress for her, she's got another thing coming. One of my biggest thrills is having someone *else* take off my clothes. I worry that I could never get a hard-on if I have to undress myself.

She rolls over, unsnaps my jeans and lowers them to my knees. Then grabbing the leg-bottoms, she pulls them off. My black Michael Jordans are next.

She does not open the condom pack with her teeth. She knows what she's doing. She's a pro.

She pulls the latex from the foil and runs it down little Petey, holding the tip in her hand. Once sheathed, I roll her on her back and get on top. It's then I notice that she hasn't taken off her tube top yet. I reach underneath and pull it over her head.

It's difficult for me to judge her breasts while she's lying on her back. Natural breasts flatten in the supine position but blossom in the roll-over. Only silicon monstrosities keep their Mount Fuji contours no matter what position the owner is in.

I press my pelvis against hers and reach down to slide myself inside. Uh, uh, yeah! There we are. I push forward.

"I don't like that," she says, pushing me off.

Huh? Did the lady at the post office say she won't take my letter because it bears an ugly stamp? Did the waitress say she can't bring me a hamburger because she's a vegetarian? This girl doesn't like to have sex? What's her job anyway?

Gently, she rolls me on my back and lowers herself between my legs. It's then that I get a good look at her breasts. There are no breasts.

What there are, are two hanging flabs, like twin warts on cables. Dry, like those pictures of Africans in *National Geographic*. Like appeals from Save The Children. Breasts like two thin letter *d*'s hanging wrinkled from her chest.

I begin to deflate.

Quickly she takes me in her mouth. Condom and all. I'll never come. I know it. I can't come from a blowjob anyway. Especially not with a condom. And I gotta watch those tits, flapping like wrinkled sheets. I'll never... uh, uh... uh, uh, uh, ah, ah, ah, aaaaaaaaaaaah! I guess I was wrong.

She smiles at her success. Now: the unpleasant part. Paying up. It's not unpleasant because it's about money. I pay for beer too and I love it. It's unpleasant because when I pay for that beer, the bartender never complains that I should pay him more. He never tells me he thinks I'm cheap, and everyone else gives him more. He never shouts. Never stomps his feet. In Thailand once, a whore screamed so loud after I paid him that I gave him an extra $30 just to shut him up. I thought maybe I was being extremely cheap and just didn't know it. I later found out they all do that... with everybody.

I worried about that in the past. The worrying helped me figure out a way to beat the system. I reach for my wallet.

"I know you have to complain," I tell her. "I realize it's part of the job and I expect it. But I want to give you this..." I hand her 1500 pesos. "It's more than I've ever given before, but I'm giving it to you because I like you so much."

It works. She smiles and says thank you. Then she begins to dress. Not a word of complaint. She leaves with a smile. No worries.

No worries? There are always worries. Suddenly I worry about funneling.

That's a process that Donny The Punk often wrote about. Maybe he invented the term. It's the narrowing of lust objects as bisexuals get older. They choose one side more and more, until they loose their bitude completely. Remember? I wasn't attracted to the biker.

Jeezus! Sounds like a horrible fate. I could just see myself, ending life as a hetero. Could there be a worse destiny? By the end of the trip, however, I learn that I don't have to worry.

I awaken the next day at 9:30 with a smile on my face and pubic hair stuck together. I figure breakfast, then a swim, will clean me right up.

In the morning, I meet Thomas in the hall on my way to taking a shit. "Wanna go for breakfast?" I ask him. "Then we can hit the beach."

"I already had breakfast," he says, "coffee, ham, eggs and two beers."

"I could never live here," he tells me. "They drink beer. I hate beer."

"OK," I say, "I need a cup of coffee. How 'bout if we change into our swimsuits and meet back here in half an hour."

I get my coffee from the lady behind the bar. She seems to know the story.

"Did you sleep well?" she asks me with feigned innocence.

I just smile, drink my coffee, leave her a nice tip and go back to my room to change into my new knee length bathing trunks.

By the time I get to the bar, Thomas is already there with a beer in his hand. He wears a bathing suit smaller than the thong worn by the girl last night. A testicle hangs out the right side, smooth as if shaven.

His body is uniformly tan under complex symmetric tattoos. They run down both sides of his hairless torso, covering his arms, and each side of his chest. There is a deep brown space in the exact center of his chest and stomach where the tattoos stop as if blocked off with tape.

"Let's get to the beach," says Thomas. "I want to work on my tan."

I look at the brownness showing through his tattoos and in the blank space on his chest and stomach.

"Looks like you've been here awhile, working on that tan," I say.

"Oh that," he answers. "Naw, I go to a tanning salon in Vancouver. Makes a nice even tan. I know it'll give me cancer some day, but I'll go out looking good."

We head to the beach, avoiding the sellers of coconuts, merengue music, beads, and corn curls. We lay out our blankets on the sand.

"Take a picture of me lying on the beach," Thomas says, handing me his camera. Then he props himself up on one arm and looks lazily into the lens. I snap the photo.

I lie back down and continue reading *The Known World*, a book about black slave owners in the pre-civil war south. I don't get much reading done. Thomas wants to talk—mostly about Thomas.

"Is that a hair transplant?" he asks, noticing my plugs in the bright sunlight.

I nod.

"I'm thinking of getting a hair transplant." He points to his slightly receding hairline. "I want to fill in the sides. You know, fill in the widow's peaks. I've already had liposuction. Love handles and that stuff. People think I'm vain. I'm not vain. I wear glasses to read. Would I wear glasses if I were vain?"

"Uh, no, of course not," I say.

"Hey," he says. "You got politics?"

"Yeah," I tell him, "but they're not like normal people's. They don't really fit into liberal or cons..."

"I guess I'm right-wing," he says, cutting me off, "law and order. Hang 'em high... but religion really fucked up the right-wing. I'm right wing, but hell, I'm an atheist."

"Yeah," I say, "nothing like religion to ruin a good idea."

"And I hate Michael Moore," he continues. "He's so anti-gun. What he did to Charlton Heston... just awful."

He turns on his stomach to even out the tan.

Suddenly he jumps to his feet.

"I'm tired of beer," he announces. "I'm getting some rum. I'll be right back."

He walks off and soon returns with a bottle. Then he looks at it.

"Whiskey!" he says with a disgusted look on his face. "I hate whiskey. Damn, I bought the wrong thing."

He hands me the bottle.

"Here," he says.

"I love anything with alcohol," I tell him, "but my money is in the hotel room."

"Fuck money," he says. "I'm giving it to you. Take it...I'll buy you a beer too. Let's go."

Thomas turns out to have a stash of generosity buried under his tattoos. During the next week, he'll buy me meals, tear pages out of his own guide book to help me out, and more. He's also much braver than the average metrosexual, traveling to Haiti by cheap bus—a trip even I (in my unvaccinated state) was afraid to take.

Flash ahead: Back at the hotel, I'm changing for the evening. From my wallet, I keep 700 pesos for dinner and another 1500 as whore money. The rest I put deep into my knapsack. Tonight, I'm gonna get a better one.

Now, we sit at an outdoor cafe at the edge of girls-street downtown. The table is near a stone fence. On the other side of the fence stand some local young men, muscular guys wearing white shirts and chinos. They lean over to talk to us.

I ask them what they want.

"I'm talking to you," says Thomas. "What's the matter? I said I'm talking to you and you're talking to someone over my shoulder. I don't get it. Just ignore them. Tell 'em to fuck off."

The guys keep talking. The usual: we got girls. We got drugs. What you want man?

"We don't have to put up with shit like this." Thomas says.

"This ain't shit, man," says the local. "I'm just doing my job."

"Your job is to bother me?" Thomas asks, using the Spanish verb *molestar*. It makes it sound much more serious. "You see we're sitting here talking and you come over here and molest us. That's your job?"

"Hey man," he says, "I didn't mean any harm."

Thomas says to me, "Yo, let's get away from here."

We take our drinks and move back away from the fence. Before long, another young man appears. This one carries stacks of merengue records.

"Let's get out of here," says Thomas. "But first, take my picture under this umbrella—next to the wall."

We pay the bill and walk down an ally toward a little street tucked between the main drag and the beach. There's one restaurant in this otherwise deserted alley.

"Let's go in this place," says Thomas. "It's cheap-looking."

A young woman, built like a large series of stacked milk crates comes over, obviously happy to see us. Thomas orders a rum and Coke. They bring it to him, forgetting to add the Coke.

At the bar is a beautiful Spanish girl. Her boyfriend, sandy hair, scruffy, is okay looking but the tall jet-black haired thin goddess deserves better. A woman I think is her mom is there too. Mid-fifties, she wears high heels that aren't quite as high as the daughter's. Mom's shoes are white. The daughter's pink. Mom's hair is cut short, slightly unruly. Daughter rates a zero on the BBS. Mom is at least a twelve-pack. They're all extremely sloshed.

It will later turn out that the woman is not the mother. She's not even from the same country. The other two are Spanish. This woman is THE FRENCH GRANDMA.

The square shaped barmaid sits at the table with Thomas and me. She rests a hand on my leg.

"I'm thirsty," she says, running her hand up my thigh toward the crotch.

"Waiter," I call, "a beer for the lady."

As we sit, the Spaniards and THE FRENCH GRANDMA dance to the merengue blasting from the stereo. The bar lady grabs both my hands and tries to drag me to my feet.

"I don't dance," I tell her.

"I show you," she says, one arm holding my waist and the hand of other grasping my own limp hand.

"OK," says the bar lady. "One Two Together, Kick! One, Two, Together, Kick... No, no, follow me. Try again,"

"You looked like a Dominican out there," says Thomas, when I return to my seat. "I mean it. If your skin were three shades darker you could be one."

We order a few more drinks, a small pair of chicken and rice dinners, and then ask for the bill. It's 1800 pesos, about $60.

"That's my whore money!" I groan as we pay up.

Just then THE FRENCH GRANDMA walks over to me. She grabs my hand. We dance. Me and her. She holds me very tight. Kisses me gently on the cheek. Presses her head against mine.

"You'll be back tomorrow," she whispers alcoholically in my ear. "Please return."

Thomas and I walk back to the hotel.

"We ate up all my whore money," I complain.

"We had to eat," says Thomas.

I tell him, "If I have to choose between nookie and no food and food and no nookie, I'll eat some other day."

"Then take Grandma!" says Thomas. "I'm telling you, she wants you."

I stop in my drunken tracks. Turn, reconsider. Then head back to the hotel. I haven't had enough beer.

Well, that's all the room I have this month. Next month, there are plenty of other characters to tell about. No plot, just characters.

And since I've been home, I also have *The Adventure of the Hermaphrodite Houseguests* to tell you. Looks like I really am gonna have to blog.

ENDNOTES: [*Visitors to my website: mykelboard.com or subscribers (email to: god@ mykelboard.com) will receive a few extra endnotes. There are just too many to keep up with.*]

Site of the month dept: Ted sent me to www.sexisforfags.com. It's the purest parody of the modern right-winger making Neanderthalism hip. It includes "10 Things All the Cool Dudes are doing *instead* of being lame and queer and having sex!"

The site urges girls to "go away now!" and sends them to the "abstinence coolness for girls" site called "Iron Hymen."

It's hilarious, but like all good humor, there's an important truth underneath it. That is the sinister push to make right-wing-ism hip.

The *New York Press* took Howard Stern to task for this same thing. He seemed so avant garde and anti-censorship while at the same time supporting the scummiest Republicans for public office.

The worst case of this was a really evil movie, *Team America*, by the South Park guys. It was oh

so funny, cool, sexy, and full of shit. The message: no matter how cowboy, gung-ho, or stupid we are, America's job is to rid the world of evil. Anywhere there's a problem, we—as the world's great dicks—should just barrel in and shoot 'em up. It may be bad, but the alternative is so much worse.

Who wrote that script? Donald Rumsfeld?

Of course, I'm not advocating censorship. Only that *we* make better propaganda than *they* make.

I want to be a tester dept: *Consumer Reports,* in the February 2005 issue, rates *Durex Extra Sensitive Lubricated Latex Condoms* as the best. They score excellent in "strength" and "reliability" and are rated "thinner" than most.

The worst condoms (especially in the strength and reliability areas) are the ones from Planned Parenthood. Now, if I were a conspiracy buff, I'd say there's a reason for that. Planned Parenthood is, after all, an abortion referral service. Their doctors perform abortions. Bad condoms mean more business.

A note on beetches: It's rare that you'll hear me use the word "bitch" without quotes around it. Especially when referring to women in general rather than someone who is one. In my experience, *most* of the bitches are males.

I feel about it like I feel about "Nigger." The word is pejorative. It should only be used with anger or quotes. I used it in this column because it was so much fun to play off *beaches.* I hope the bitches will forgive me.

Speaking of beetches dept: I went to a *SCREW* Magazine re-launching party. Charlie Mordecai, the new editor, is a long-time pal of mine. His real name is something less Jewish, but he perked it up to go with the job. For the details you can check out the website at www.screwmagforever.com.

I spent the evening ogling the busts of some writers for BUST magazine. I ogled so much I bought each of the zero BBS scales a beer. That was in case I rated lower on *their* BBS scale. It didn't work.

Jew of the Month dept: So I get a bunch of new CDs from my pal Ivalo in Bulgaria. And there, with his info is an Israeli distributor. Yow! An Israeli punkrock distributor, so I write to the guy trying to find out what's happening there. "Are there any Jew-Arab punkrock bands?" I ask.

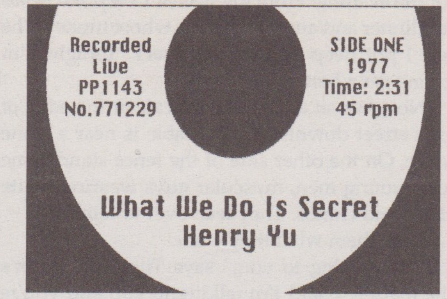
He tells me no. It's his dream, but he's never seen any Arab punk bands. They're all into heavy metal.

I wonder if it's Death Metal, or better Satanic Metal. Since, for Muslims, The US is the great Satan, would a Muslim satanic metal band sing pro-American songs?

Anyway, I don't even know the guy's name, but his company is Constipation Records and you can write him at: constipationrcds@yahoo.com. Get your songs to Israel. Mine are already there!

—>Looks like I finally *will* have some books coming out. That means I wanna tour to support 'em. If you can set up a reading in your hometown or at your school, I'll do something nice for you. Email me at: god@mykelboard.com. Sometimes that address goes kablooey. So if the email bounces, try: mykelb1@ix.netcom.com... but that's a lot to remember.

Oh yeah, if you want to send me more of *those* videos. I'm still at: PO Box 137, Prince St. Station, New York, NY 10012.



Out to Lunch

Although I've typically found the extremes of punk somehow unconvincing (even GG ALLIN is a caricature), I've always found LYDIA LUNCH authentically frightening. She was very adult when most punks were fresh faced, and goths came off as poseurs. Try listening to her *King of Siam* LP in the dark at night, alone. The same chills as SUICIDE's *Frankie Teardrop.* I didn't know what to make of it. I never thought about seeing her live. She seemed like nightmares planted in your head. Meanwhile, Texas correspondent Lona Leigh had the guts to check out Lunch on her recent spoken word tour. She had this to say:

Last January, when LYDIA LUNCH came to town, I purchased four tickets to her spoken word show, *In Our Time of Dying,* at the Axiom, Houston TX (yes, the Axiom of lore), but ended up turning three of them back to the box office.

"Lydia *who?*" No one knew, and I could garner no interest. Perhaps this could be interpreted as a statement about my social life. But I also see it as symptomatic of where Lunch exists—or doesn't—in the public conscience. Despite several brushes with notoriety and instances of artistic acclaim, Lunch remains obscured from the myopic vision of the taste makers and trend setters, although I am not sure why. It seems clear she is a relentless progenitor of ideas that work their way (albeit slowly) into the mainstream—her discography is too lengthy to delve into here. Still, she is largely under-credited.

LYDIA LUNCH was born in Rochester, New York, in 1959. She went to New York City in the mid-70s with the idea of becoming a writer. In a 1997 interview she named PATTI SMITH, RICHARD HELL and TELEVISION as her musical heroes, but clings to literature as her creative *raison d'etre,* and cited Henry Miller and Jean Genet as her greatest influences. For Lunch, music is mainly a backdrop/soundscape for lyrics. And she disassociates herself from the New York punk scene, claiming she got lumped in because of her predilections toward primal scream art and black clothing, that on an artistic level she really had very little to do with punk. She identifies herself much more closely with the "no wave" movement, which she explained was about confronting personal insanity, apathy and self-oppression. She has worked with the likes of BRIAN ENO, RICHARD KERN, and HENRY ROLLINS. Her band, 8 EYED SPY, put her in touch with a more traditional rock-and-roll listener, but she never commercialized. She outs 8 EYED SPY as being "too catchy" and "too accessible." Despite offers from record companies she quit the band, believing steadfastly that repetition is unnecessary and ultimately uninteresting, that she didn't want to play the same songs for ten years, over and over. Which may be factored when considering her underwhelming popularity. Moving quickly from project to project and genre to genre, her audience can't find her, much less keep up with her.

The crowd at the Axiom was mainly the funky-punks, with a few book-toting, hip-to-be-squares and Friday-business-casuals rounding out the mix. The recently reformed Axiom, which seats 90, was full. And the booking agent told me he optimistically added an extra show at the last minute, which was also almost sold out. I wanted to take this as a sign Lunch (or her marketing director) does know how to connect.

In person, Lunch is something of a schizzed Scheherazade who, with the fervor of a shit-slinging anthropoid gone bananas, harpoons and lampoons everything and everyone from her neighbors to the cops to the political establishment. But her favorite target is herself. On stage she appears overwrought by the toll that her personal relationships have taken on her. If you believe that she is not abusing her poetic license and that the hyperbolic expressions she uses are not mere exaggeration, you'll find her delightfully demented and almost unacceptably sincere. Despite the expletives and the deviant humor, her work rings true. She gravitated toward "fucking and fighting," self-inflicted psychosis, and ritualized drug use as her themes. I winced several times during the segment where she described her boyfriend's descent into mental illness and addiction, which she seems to have facilitated by pandering to his constant needs for coddling and tit-biting, and by plying him with substances. Whether she believes in karma, I couldn't hazard a guess, but from the sounds of her she definitely has suffered enough to deserve a clean slate. Just when you feel about to cry "Get down off the wood and give Jesus the cross!," she resurrects herself—a tattered phoenix flying the middle finger—dropping a stink-bomb of a 1,000-year-old egg in your lap: "You're no better than me," and, "What are you going to do?" and, "This is what male and female is about," is how she wraps it up. She is willing to set herself up to be judged, but only for so long...She is a quintessential confrontationist, challenging the audience to get busy and take the plank from their own eye. She seems to want to show us ourselves by lancing her boils in public. When she exposes her nasty bits, she kinda wakes the audience up to themselves. If she didn't reek of fringe (and a hangover), she'd be the ultimate, if not accidental, testimonial speaker for the Scared Straight program. I hope I don't see her ranting on a corner in the East Village someday, like Lenny Bruce.

You won't be able to speed track through Lunch's most recent CD album, *Smoke in the Shadows,* for the simple reason that the songs are

story-like and are presented mainly in a conversational style which commands attention. Plus, they're peppered with plenty of truths to ponder. My favorite, "temptation is greater than memory," could be the first reasonable explanation for why I keep doing certain things. The album is really cohesive, yet each song has the distinct flavor of a different place and time, and she nails each one. At once you feel yourself sipping side cars and grinding with the initiated, and then, you're on the stoop with a can of Colt in East Harlem. This album represents what Lou Reed would like to be. It is a brilliant cacophony of sounds and styles, much like New York City itself. My favorite track, "Lost World," has such a great beat, it's so smooth and cool, it will get your imagination going. She takes her themes of sex abuse (the consenting adult kind), drug and alcohol abuse, and well, abuse, to new levels and you may find yourself thinking about the album even when you're not listening.

I suppose that popularity control has been a part of Lunch's game, in the name of keeping it real. Still, I hope a lot of people will hear this album, since she is on the level of a Waits. Big boys got nothin' on her.

Fucking Up Your Video Deck

There was some major grunge kinship between Minneapolis and Seattle during the late 80s. Maybe it was something in the flannel. Or maybe it was a non-toeing-the-line type Marine named Tom Hazelmyer, who bounced back and forth between the two places, swinging his big seven-inches via Amphetamine Reptile Records—first, a vehicle for his own masturbatory affair, HALO OF FLIES, and later for denizens of similarly noise worshipping hoods. As Sub Pop's bastard cousin, it hit pay dirt with the band HELMET, head swelling to self-mocking proportions when it rechristened itself AmRep Industries.

Dope Guns and Fucking Up Your Video Deck Vol. 1-3 is a DVD that digitizes the three individual VHS tapes of the same name, plus a baker's dozen extra videos. It's presented as sort of a monopolized MTV station wherein all the videos are of the pig-fuck variety and the host is one tight and barely funny mutha, Dr. Sphinctor. The testosterone high can be a rather swift kick in the groin, but it's a good a way as any to get the gestalt of underground white boy aggro pre- and post-Nirvana. The exception might be HELMET, whose attack might be more aligned with METALLICA.

Page Hamilton, the leader of HELMET, also did time as a member of the BRANCA ENSEMBLE, an ever rotating army of electric guitarists of whom Lee Ranaldo was also alum. "Symphony No. 8 and 10," performed live at The Kitchen in NYC is also out on DVD on the Atavistic label. Glenn Branca, the ex-no waver who's got hair that Donald Trump would kill for, pushes his riffmeisters so hard that they look in perpetual masturbation without the cum shot. Though the visuals don't really add a heckuva lot to the experience, the music itself is gripping, majestic, and transporting. This is what prog rock only aspired to be, stripped of the self-important blowhard.

While highly influential 80s zine *Forced Exposure* was responsible for bringing Branca into my consciousness, they tried unsuccessfully with their devoted gushing over SUN RA, the outré jazz artist. Given my staunch r'n'r leanings at the time, it was a no go. Over the last couple of decades, however, I've begun to realize that it's practically inevitable for any proper rock 'n' roller to eventually explore, if not embrace, the land of free jazz and its ilk. Sun Ra is certainly one of the most special artists as it was not just his music but his entire being, the outer space thing, plus the fact that he got an entire Arkestra's worth of folks to embody his way out leanings, that appeal to the punk aesthete in me. *The Magic Sun* is an experimental art film by Phill Niblock from 1966, only 17 minutes long so it ain't got the bore attached, that shows Sun and his Arkestra in a stark negative black and white, with close-ups of the band as they play. If 17 minutes seems too little for your money, the extras, being Sun Ra espousing his tripped-out philosophies, should be well enough to put you in the buying mood. More cred than the entire CLASH catalogue put together.

Also on Atavistic's Unheard Music Series is another SUN RA-related baffle: *The Cry of Jazz*, which was done in 1959, his Chicago period. It's a documentary rant on race and jazz music that showed that blacks were the punks of that era, and jazz was their punk rock. Even its proclamation of "Jazz Is Dead" as it's been misappropriated and stripped echoes that of punk as it has been by the army of BLINK 182s. Worth watching, though unlikely repeatedly.

Ending on a lighter note, DEVO's *Live in the Land of the Rising Sun* DVD is a 2003 show in Japan. Fun backstage stuff wherein Mark Mothersbaugh and Gerry Casale chat while sitting with their respective pugs in their laps. The nice thing about the DEVO aesthetic is that it translates reasonably well to post- middle age. The guys may all be much wider than they used to be, but they can still execute the jerky moves. Jerkiness is easily retained in their muscle memory. Even their outfits age well. The "energy domes" are perfect for balding heads and the plastic suits cover up the flabby bodies. I think they must have thought this through a long time ago.

The show is great, by the way. It's also cool to see one of the extras on the DVD which is a 1980 live performance of "Gut Feeling". If not at their peak it'd have to have been damned close.

Submissions to Henry at 46 Roosevelt Circle, Palo Alto, CA 94306, email at terasearch@yahoo.com

Last time I rode the Greyhound was September 1999. Over five years later, I'm on it again. That time I was four months pregnant and heading to Richmond, VA to meet up with Citizen Fish for their US tour. This time, I'm dashing back to be at work on Monday morning after a weekend in Cocoa Beach with my almost-five-year-old girl and Daddy 'Nesto.

I could have just spent the weekend at home alone and saved the $39.50 bus ride, but why? This way I get a weekend warrior style vacation with my famdamily fun troupe, *and* since they were staying in Cocoa Beach four more days, plenty of wondrous alone time too.

Heading to the Cocoa Greyhound station, already guessing I might miss the bus, I realized that just getting there and onboard was just as much part of the experience as the bus ride itself. I had gotten the station's address from Greyhound's automated phone service and 'Nesto thought he remembered where it was from having grown up around there. But his dad told us he thinks it was damaged in last season's hurricanes and that it's temporarily located elsewhere. We drove in frustrated circles for a while, even after having stopped to ask three different people if they knew where the station was. When we finally found it, it was five minutes past our scheduled departure time. It looked like a bombed out, abandoned building and there was no bus in sight.

A call to Greyhound yielded me some guy's advice to wait there for 25 minutes and if the bus doesn't arrive, to call back and they would then be able to give me the bus's time status. 'Nesto said that sounded completely retarded, so I called them back to ask if this abandoned shithole was even the current Cocoa station. I got a woman this time and she told me no, that it's temporarily at an Exxon station about four state roads away.

Huh? Why'd they tell me—twice even—to be at the old station?

By now I'm thinking I've really missed the bus. We have to stop twice to ask for directions, but finally find it. And there was no bus in sight, again. The Exxon clerk told me that there was no 8 pm bus, only a 9 pm bus.

Huh? Why did the Greyhound schedule tell me 8 pm all along?

Weird, but lucky. Not only had I not missed the bus, but I also had about a half hour to eat some pizza with my sweethearts before I dogged it home. I enjoyed every minute, etching their images, imprinting their voices, feeling lucky and in love.

I wasn't done with my eggplant roll when 'Nesto spotted the bus pulling in a few minutes early. I dashed through the store to grab my backpack from the car. The clerk told me I could relax because the driver always comes in before departing. I still went out to grab my backpack, and it's a good thing I did because from across the football field length parking lot, I saw the door being pulled closed.

Scramble! No time to say goodbyes—I take off. I hear my girl calling for me to come back to kiss her, and of course I do, but so fast I think I missed her mouth. I ran as fast as I could and the driver let me on, telling me I could pay up at the station stop in Vero.

Will someone who's involved with the bus arrangements please get the story straight? Or, like I said before, is just catching the bus where the story actually starts?

Not many minutes into the trip, some guy a few rows back complains, "Somebody's ass rotten!" It must be true what they say about a rat not being able to smell its own hole. I'm not bothered in the least by the rot. I settled in with the 5th Anniversary issue of *Clamor* and am only bothered by the strange underwater gargling sound (or is it a neglected, crackling bus speaker?) that I soon discover is a guy's snoring.

In Vero the driver said we'd be taking a fifteen-minute lunch break when we get to Ft. Pierce. It was 10 pm so I guess that's why laughter burst out all around the bus. That's when the woman next to me took the opportunity to let me know that she thought about the driver. I couldn't make out most of her French West Indies English, but I did make out "reckless driving," "swerving," "he got lost," and "not on time." I tried to show a little empathy, but I really didn't care. I thought he was driving just fine.

At our break in Ft. Pierce another woman is dissatisfied with the driver. He can't give her any helpful information about what stop in Miami will be closest to her hostel in South Beach. So she asks me. I'm a little more helpful, but not enough for her to be able to make a sound decision. I wonder if I should just offer for her to get off at my stop and I'll get my car from home and take her there myself. Before I could decide, another woman offers me her lighter when she sees my match lighting efforts repeatedly blown out. So far, only interactions with other women. That's good. The guys are all pretty creepy.

Back onboard, rolling south on I-95, right around West Palm Beach, a bump jolts me to attention and a quick crunch sound has me whirling around to try to see what the fuck just happened. A damn car hit the bus! Or was it the other way around? Whichever way it was, I knew we were fine so I started rooting for whoever was in the car to be fine too. Evidently they were, because they kept going.

Remember the worried woman? You should have seen her silent panic attack, her eyes bulging and the way she grabbed at her chest. She was silent when she caught me staring at her, but her thoughts were screaming at me, "I told you so!" I still didn't care. We were all fine.

And so began the peanut gallery commentary. Just like the majority of my fellow passengers busted out laughing at the driver earlier over a silly little thing, the majority of them this time whipped out their cell phones to urgently tell someone they know about our Interstate hit and run. I learn a lot from their frantic conversations, that this latest incident in figures. There's already been a flat tire in Tallahassee and something else in Jacksonville, and the driver got lost in Cocoa, driving around in circles for a while. (Huh? Even the driver hadn't been informed about the Cocoa station's closure and temporary relocation!) From what I gather, it sounds like I missed a pretty funny episode of the driver trying to explain to the passengers, "I know it's around here somewhere. I just know I can find it; I grew up eighteen miles from here."

The worried woman wants me to borrow a cell phone from someone so I can call the Greyhound company to complain for her about what she thinks is the driver's incompetence. She tops off her argument with, "And I haven't seen him eat anything all day!" I pretend I don't understand and tell her to relax, that he's at least giving an appearance of handling the most recent incident appropriately. After all, he'd pulled over, called both the cops and the company to report the accident, and had all of us fill out a chintzy passenger report of the accident for Greyhound.

After that, she kept glancing my way, still complaining. I wondered why, out of all the other passengers available to her, she'd picked me? Couldn't she see I didn't care?

We sat and sat on the side of I-95 and the cops eventually got there. Some more sitting and sitting and we eventually got back on the road. When we finally made it to West Palm Beach, the worried woman switched seats away from me. Good riddance.

Another hour and we finally made it to my final destination. I decided against waking the woman who needed to get to South Beach to offer her to come with me. It was already 3 am.

What takes three hours by car took six hours on the bus. I didn't mind though. And luckily, all the Greyhound schedule and station location misinformation was comical. The ride was beyond a literal trip, I spent less on the ticket than I would have on gas, and I was safer having been in a bus for that Interstate swipe than I would have been alone in my car.

I retrieved my bike that I had locked up at the bus stop beforehand and peddled home through the not quite totally empty downtown streets, but empty enough to give me a prelude of what I'd feel the next four days—just me, mama free. I breathed it all in deep with each pedal, and felt more than fine.

Punkparents, get in touch.

yardwideyarns@hotmail.com or P.O. Box 220331 / Hollywood, FL 33022.

Nothing should appear in a newspaper unless a government censor has first approved it, say half the high school students asked in a recent poll. It seems that free speech advocates are losing the never-ending war over freedom of expression. This is because censorship is being redefined.

The latest skirmish over the First Amendment concerns Ward Churchill, an Ethnic Studies professor at the University of Colorado at Boulder, which is a liberal enclave in a conservative state. Hamilton College in upstate New York, which had invited Professor Churchill to speak about American Indian activism, cancelled his appearance after someone Googled his name and found an essay he had written three years earlier, which had appeared without a smidgen of attention at the time, much less controversy.

"Some People Push Back" is a furious rant written mere hours after the September 11th attacks, and one suspects the tone of the piece owes much to the revulsion that thoughtful Americans felt for the mindless "United We Stand" jingoism that stifled attempts at serious analysis of the terrorists' motivations in the immediate aftermath. "The men who flew the missions against the WTC and Pentagon were not 'cowards,'" Churchill wrote, presaging remarks that got Bill Maher fired by ABC a few months later. "The word describes all those 'fighting men and women' who sat at computer consoles aboard ships in the Persian Gulf [during the 1991 Gulf War], enjoying air-conditioned comfort while launching cruise missiles into neighborhoods filled with random human beings."

But these are not the comments which caused Hamilton College officials to dis-invite Professor Churchill after more than 100 death threats led them to conclude they couldn't guarantee his safety. By this point most people accept that it takes some stones to fly a plane into a building. Mohammad Atta was a mass murderer, but not a wimp.

After World War II, Churchill reminds us, "Pious Americans…led the way in assigning the onus of collective guilt to the German people as a whole, not for things they as individuals had done, but for what they had allowed—nay, empowered—their leaders and their soldiers to do in their name. If the principle was valid then, it remains so now, as applicable to Good Americans as it was the Good Germans." After calling those killed in the Pentagon legitimate military targets, he challenged the presumed innocence of the World Trade Center victims, calling them "little Eichmanns": "They formed a technocratic corps at the very heart of America's global financial empire—the 'mighty engine of profit' to which the military dimension of US policy has always been enslaved—and they did so both willingly and knowingly. Recourse to 'ignorance'—a derivative, after all, of the word 'ignore'—counts as less than an excuse among this relatively well-educated elite. To the extent that any of them were unaware of the costs and consequences to others of what they were involved in…it was because they were too busy braying, incessantly and self-importantly, into their cell phones, arranging power lunches and stock transactions, each of which translated, conveniently out of sight, mind and smelling distance, into the starved and rotting flesh of infants [dying in Iraq due to trade sanctions]."

My two cents: Actually, the World Trade Center was no nerve center of American capitalism. Second-tier real estate in an inconvenient corner of Manhattan's financial district, the tow-

ers were home to hundreds of two-man representative offices for obscure foreign import-export outfits. That's why so many foreigners died that day. The biggest Wall Street brokerages and investment banks keep their offices further downtown, closer to the action. Only one notable personality, conservative commentator Barbara Olsen, died on 9/11, and she was on one of the planes. No boldface names from the business world died. The 2,800-plus New Yorkers who perished in the towers were mostly clerks. Even if you buy the notion of "collective guilt," the WTC victims, some of whom were illegal immigrants, waiters and maintenance staff, were as innocent as could be. On the other hand, the citizens of a democracy surely bear some responsibility for the actions of their government.

So did Hamilton College censor Ward Churchill?

Not according to the letters of the editor section of the "liberal" New York Times. "Those who present forums to college students," wrote one Dean Brown, "should investigate those who are offered the privilege of speaking…those opinions…do not need to be given a soapbox."

Attorney Thomas Boyden wrote in 1999, "There is no such thing as 'private censorship.' It is only when government uses its coercive powers to inhibit speech that censorship occurs." This is a boilerplate conservative trope. Jay Ambrose, writing in the right-wing *Washington Times*, used it to justify Disney's 2004 cancellation of a distribution agreement for the movie *Fahrenheit 9/11*: "Don't call it censorship, which is what the government does when it tells private parties they cannot say something publicly."

Like Winston Smith in *1984* I'd heard this repeated so often that I began to believe it was true. But the dictionary doesn't relate censorship to government action. The verb to censor is simply "to examine books, films, or other material and to remove or suppress what is considered morally, politically, or otherwise objectionable." As a noun, a censor is "a person who is authorized to read publications or correspondence or to watch theatrical performances and suppress in whole or in part anything considered obscene or politically unacceptable." A censor can be an editor, producer, or high school principal.

Censorship is grounded in motivation. An editor who, faced with space limitations, decides not to run an article because it's less interesting or important than another isn't a censor. He becomes a censor, however, if he cans a piece because of taste or political concerns.

As Ambrose points out, "No company—whether a film studio, newspaper corporation or whatever—can or should publish or distribute everything that comes its way." He's got a point. Who wants to read a paper containing 290 million letters to the editor? Nevertheless, we should ask ourselves three simple questions to determine whether a voice is being censored or edited:

What are the reasons for the suppression?

Were Professor Churchill an inept lecturer or ignorant about American Indian activism, the subject he was originally invited to discuss, Hamilton might have a legitimate reason to disinvite him. But his critics don't say that. He is being savaged for sins of tastelessness (insulting the dead) and political incorrectness (arguing that ordinary Americans, tacitly complicit in their government's genocidal foreign policies, had it coming on 9/11). These are dictionary definitions of censorship.

What is being suppressed?

Popular opinions don't require protection. The First Amendment was written to protect free expression that causes discomfort—even rage—by the majority. Both the censor and the civil libertarian will probably disagree with Churchill's assessment of American collective guilt, but the true defender of free speech recognizes his own revulsion as further reason to err on the side of open discussion over silence.

Who is being suppressed?

Perhaps the most reliable barometer of censorship is the relative socio-political status of people and institutions urging the suppression versus the voice being suppressed. In one corner of the Churchill controversy, we have a 57-year-old Ethnic Studies instructor with unusually strident political views. In the other, there's Colorado's governor and state legislature, hundreds of right-wing talk radio hosts around the country, and Bill O'Reilly, the hugely popular Fox News talking head—all of who have demanded that the University of Colorado fire him. These calls have prompted vandals to trash his car and threaten his life. Only the powerful may censor; only the weak can be censored.

The most ironic aspect of censorship is that it attracts wider attention to comments that were previously ignored. After the speech police went after Ward Churchill, the readership of his 9/11 essay shot up by millions. He became nationally known. Had the right-wingers managed to censor their own big mouths, only a few hundred souls would ever have seen it in an obscure journal called *Pockets of Resistance*.

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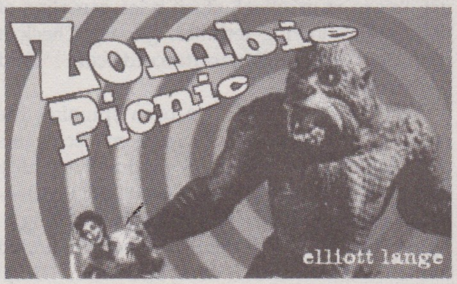
NEW BOOKS: *Wake Up, You're Liberal!: How We Can Take America Back From The Right* (Soft Skull Press, 336 pgs, $14.95), is out now, available everywhere. *Generalissimo El Busho: Essays And Cartoons On The Bush Years* (NBM Publishing, 208 pgs, $19.95 hardback/$15.95 paperback) is also out. The speaking tour is over but if you're at a high school or college with a budget for bringing in speakers, I'd be happy to come to your city.



Well, running a bit late as usual this month—the combination of being overworked and the ever-circulating viruses of a small city not helping matters. Nonetheless, some bright spots emerge, like the very un-metal weather we've been having here lately.

First off, for some reason, the demos I've been sent for review lately have all been surprisingly good. I don't know why I couldn't have had similar luck when I was trying to run a record label as opposed to the cock rock and Russian NINE INCH NAILS knock-offs I received instead. Anyway, it's great to hear so many new bands churning out great shit. I should've mentioned SELF EMPLOYED SAVIOR's latest demo *Bright Ideas Bring the Darkest Deaths* in my last column, but my lethargy has allowed me to mention it at a more auspicious time, since they'll be hitting the road throughout the western states soon after this issue comes to light. This North Dakotan quartet (now apparently a five-piece for tour) has a sound that I've had difficulty nailing down in a month and a half's worth of listens. They're ostensibly a thrashy hardcore band, except that their guitars are way heavier than the normal staples of the style and their song structures are impressively diverse within just six songs. They're not full-on grind, but are far from it, like maybe DYSTOPIA meets LEFT FOR DEAD with occasional noodly metal bits and wicked hoarse screaming. I'm looking forward to seeing 'em this May and they should be plenty brutal with an additional guitarist, so check their site for dates and get in touch: www.geocities.com/selfemployedsavior/.

Next up is the five-song *Sea-Sick* demo from Columbus, OH's superbly named VOMITROCITY, boasting also probably my favorite cover art of the month. Just how great white sharks, Red Cross frigates, Papa John's pizza and of course, vomit are related is beyond my immediate comprehension, but the music is much more palatable, being a killer take on classic gore metal a la EXHUMED, *Symphonies*-era CARCASS or, given their location, REPULSION and HEMDALE, with great regurgitated pig-squeal vocals and butchering guitar riffs. Apparently this demo is almost sold out but a couple of 7"s should be splashing into toilets soon, so keep a nose out and email at: nuklearwolf@yahoo.com.

And then two days before deadline I'm sent the best demo I've heard since ASSHOLEFACE changed their name to KALIBAS. Undoubtedly the meanest band in Saskatchewan (wow!), POSER DISPOSER is basically the Canadian incarnation of BIRDFLESH, sharing with their Swedish brethren a penchant for hilarious lyrics and killer vocal trade-offs mixed with surgically precise drumming and super catchy riffs. Any band that crafts a whole song around the best Onion headline ever, "Drugs Win Drug War," is already miles ahead of the competition in my book, but when they're actually massively tight, fast, and head-crushing on top—well, it's as sublime as the song "Dishwasher," excerpted as follows: "Punks and dishes do not mix / That's a problem we should fix / Patched up pants and a spiky leather jacket / Tried to wash dishes but he just couldn't hack it / Scrub real hard don't be tard / Wash that shit you idiot / Dishwasher / You haven't got a hope / Dishwasher / A Towel

and the soap." Additionally, there are two separate songs professing a vehement opposition to the existence of winged feathered things—pretty interesting given the band I think they most resemble—what is it about birds and grind? All I know about these guys otherwise is that two thirds of the band used to play in DFA, they have some 7" out I can't find anything about, and they're recording again soon. Till then, get in touch and maybe you too can get a fancy spray-painted 11-song CD-r like the one I got: POSER DISPOSER, 1675 Bader Cr, S7M 3V2, Saskatoon, Sask, CANADA, javexgarcia@hotmail.com . If ever I did get my sorry excuse for a label back up and running, this would be the first band I'd call.

Moving on to the big names, Relapse has graced us this month with not one but two massive tour de forces in their death metal/grind catalog and are still setting possibly the longest-running record for a label, consistently releasing great records without turning to commercialized crap. First up is CEPHALIC CARNAGE's new disc, *Anomalies*, their most straightforward death metal oriented release yet. I've never been anything less than floored with every live CEPHALIC show I've seen over the last six years, but I have to admit to not feeling as enthusiastic about their first couple full-lengths. They always had the unimaginable technical proficiency but it seemed they didn't quite harness this into standalone solid songs until the excellent *Lucid Interval* album of '02, easily my favorite of their releases. But this new one is slowly and steadily approaching similar greatness. They've dropped some of the schizophrenic change-what-we're-doing-every-three-seconds aesthetic that both made them so amazing to watch and prevented their tunes from sticking in my brain, and the result is relative accessibility (for them). This is by no means a conventional record though, and is still exponentially better and more complex than 99 percent of even the good grind and death metal bands. They still manage to sneak in more tonal left-turns and unexpected riff changes than anyone short of CRYPTOPSY, and the fact that their seemingly unlimited creative and technical capabilities are being harnessed into tighter, more cohesive songs is making them more and more one of the top contenders for Most Amazing Fucking Band on the Planet distinction.

The other Relapse release is the third full-length from ORIGIN, *Echoes of Decimation*, full discussion of which I'll limit in deference to the punk purists at *Maximum*, as this band has about zero to do with punk and is about as pure and full-on a metal band as you'll ever find. Anyone interested in fast music however need look for none else as this is one of the most furiously relentless releases in recent memory. Taking the sub-30-minute full-length cue from *Reign in Blood*, these guys must have serious trouble getting their songs over the three minute mark given how fast they play. This is by far my favorite record from them—the guitar-playing is phenomenal, and though they apparently lost their old drummer (the guy from ANGELCORPSE), the new guy is no slouch. I even heard him throw in a gravity blast or two. Not sure where these guys are based these days—I know they were originally from Kansas but now at least one of 'em calls the Guitar Center in San Francisco home so I guess that makes them officially the fastest local band here.

While I'm at it, there're a few more Bay Area metal bands making some good noise these days. Inspired by both their commanding live show at the 3 Days of Darkness Festival back in September and the great full-length from their um, "associates" in GHOUL, I've finally started giving more than a cursory listen to Oakland's long-running gore-grinders IMPALED. Which works out well since their new release on Century Media, *Death After Life* is far better than I expected. Expanding their range of influence to the "other" CARCASS records, this one features more unique, catchy, and at times, melodic songs a la "Necrotocism" or even "Heartwork." It still boggles the mind just how identical to Jeff Walker their vocals are, but since IMPALED seems impelled to impose their imposter compositions on us indefinitely, at least they're coming up with some damn catchy riffs and keeping their sense of humor alive undead.

Also rising from the dead, are a couple members from Santa Cruz, California's most under-appreciated now defunct prog-metal alchemists SPACEBOY, currently playing under the questionable moniker GARGANTULA. Even if naming their bands wasn't always their strong suit, guitarist Bill and vocalist Clifford (of BL'AST renown) are still crafting some of the most challenging and unique songs in metal these days. Bill remains one of my favorite guitar players ever for his bizarre VOIVOD meets MORBID ANGEL meets PINK FLOYD axe wizardry. I hadn't heard from these guys in a long while so it's great to hear them back in form with some of their better material in years. The full-length is called *Infinitasm*—get it at: www.gargantula.com.

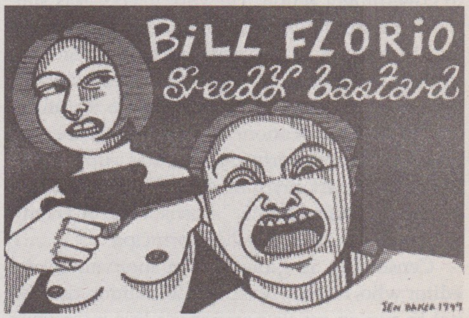
And continuing on with the surprising fertile SF metal scene, Skin Graft Records has seen fit to resurrect its comic-book 7" series a la the old DAZZLING KILLMEN records with the unlikely yet brilliant pairing of SF's own HIGH ON FIRE with Japan's MAGMA-worshipping prog duo RUINS. Furthering the bizarre juxtaposition, it's a split release with Relapse too. Unfortunately, the HIGH ON FIRE track, "Brother in the Wind" is also on the recently released *Blessed Black Wings* record (too bad this didn't get released first—they woulda raked it in), but still that song's great, the comic's cool, and if you haven't been introduced to RUINS yet, this is an excellent, albeit brief, sampling of their mind-blowing technical genius. Check it out at: www.skingraftrecords.com and www.relapse.com.

Also on 7" format, I've been spinning the recent *U.S. Disastwhore* EP a lot from Michigan's own VIVISUK. I love the raw production quality and the great male / female trade-off vocals—kinda made me laugh a bit when I was trying to figure out who "Vivi Steph"s vocals reminded me of and realized it was Bob from DROP DEAD. VIVISUK's not quite as intense as the vegan warriors—a little crustier and more straight-ahead "punk" as opposed to grind—but they're on the right path and are plenty pissed and have some cool catchy songs. This was sent in care of the good folks at Bacon Towne Records, who sent a lovely letter along with the record. I couldn't quite make out what it read, but I think it said something about putting out a double RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE tribute album in the near future and that they were accepting submissions effective immediately. So take the power back and send in those Bombtracks to: Bacon Towne Records, PO Box 1063, Tallevast, FL 34207, www.upthefucking-pigs.com.

Real quick, for the second issue in a row I'm gonna name-drop my pal Sven's label Yellow Dog (www.yellowdog.de) because a) I endorse favoritism and b) he just released the SAYYADINA full-length, *Fear Gave Us Wings* on LP and it missed the review section in the last issue because it's already been reviewed on CD. If you're a vinyl-only nut you got no excuse not to have this now. I said it before when I reviewed the CD on Sound Pollution and I'll say it time and again—these guys are one of the absolute best grind bands in the world these days and this record handily demonstrates why. Wait no more—get this and track down all their previous releases too, especially the split with BRUCE BANNER and their tracks on the *Swedish Assault* compilation.

That's about it for this month. I hope everyone had the chance to catch the epic Mui Thai mastery of *Ong Bak* in theaters recently, as it's undoubtedly the best martial arts film in many a year. Tony Jaa is god. Send anything fast and heavy to: Elliott Lange, 701 Broderick St, San Francisco, CA 94117, cromlaughs@hotmail.com.

"Drugs win the drug war, they just wanted it more" —POSER DISPOSER



THE DEATH SLOT FOLLIES

Everyone who's ever been in a band knows all about the Death Slot. I've had encounters with it several times this month, and I think it would be good for everyone to have a Death Slot primer column. What to do about the Death Slot, who gets the Death Slot, when the Death Slot is necessary, when the Death Slot is cruel and unusual.

OK, for the stupid kid whose mom picks 'em up at the suburban show, the Death Slot is that band that played after the band you wanted to see. Lemme give you an example. RIVER CITY REBELS, yeah, you know that band? Well the band that played after them this past month that you never heard of, even though they're

from your town and went to Denny's instead of watching 'em — *they got the Death Slot.* Well just so you know, I guess this band's popularity must have dwindled in the past year and they suddenly realized that in a couple of places. "Psh, these kids are getting picked up by their moms before we play! Let's make some schmuck band play after us every show next time." So that's what they did. Bad move, kids. See, now you have bands in every town talking shit about what douchebags RIVER CITY REBELS are for making their band play to the five people that were nice enough to not leave. Well, either that or the five kids whose parents forgot to pick them up.

This is something you have to handle carefully on a show-to-show basis. It's sort of like giving long prison terms to minors. For example, the SHEMPS were playing a show on a Wednesday night in Reno, Nevada. The crowd consisted of people sorta glammed out, yet wearing MOST PRECIOUS BLOOD T-shirts. I guess there's this whole new generation of hardcore kids that actually wanna get laid nowadays, so they dress like they're in the SHINS or I dunno, one of those well dressed, not-one-good-song bands that I don't need to listen to because I already know what they sound like. Modern technology produces hardcore kids who try to have sex with girls and girls that wanna have sex with hardcore kids — what will they think of next?!

Oh yeah — my Death Slot story. Anyhow, whenever the SHEMPS play to a well-dressed fashion kid crowd in NYC, the new smoking laws state someplace in the fine print that all fashion people must stand outside smoking while band wearing 15-year old Crazy Eddie T-shirts plays. So I asked the woman running the show if everyone would leave since she put us on last on a Wednesday night. She told me, everyone is here to see you. I nodded and thanked her. Well, being that she sets up shows in Reno on a regular basis, she was right. They all did stay, and if we had demanded to go on, the local band would have played to no one and thus you get "Fuck those Shemps guys." So, RIVER CITY REBELS, drop me a line, I may be able to refer a good oral proctologist to whoever had the bright idea of doing this in every city on your tour. (By the way, my friend Dave Wilentz said oral proctologist was more correct. I originally put oral podiatrist. Way to ruin a joke, Dave.)

OK. Death Slot story number two brings us the usual Death Slot scenario. The promoter who puts on pay-to-play shows but tries to call it something else. Hmmm, what are the kids all going to nowadays? Oh, I know, if I put too many bands on the bill, I can call it a fest. OK, so one such New York promoter emailed me a couple of months ago and wrote something along the lines of, "Hey hey, my name is Poor Sound Pauly, I'm setting up a 'Garage Fest,' would your band like to play, and could you refer me to some other bands you think I should book?" Now, I already know this guy is a little shaky and I've always turned down shows he's offered for the sheer fact that he's asked us to play with horrendously bad bar bands, but since he was asking me to help him pick bands, I figured it was worth hearing him out. So I mentioned all of my friends' bands in NYC, plus a few from NJ, Boston, and Canada. He wrote me back saying he had no interest in booking bands from out of town and he wanted us to go on at 2 am, so basically he was putting on a show with bands we play with all the time at decent places, but he was doing it at a strip club where the cover was twice as much, and he wanted to give us the Death Slot. I think I immediately had a wedding to go to that night.

Anyhow, a few of the bands I had referred agreed to play, and UNAMEDNJPOPPUNKBANDINMINIVAN agreed to play not the Death Slot but the slot after the Death Slot (by the way, such weasly promoters call the Death Slot "Clean-up"). I guess we can call this the purgatory slot named after that IRON MAIDEN single that wasn't all that good. Poor Sound Pauly then added that last-minute detail that if 20 people didn't pay to see you, you wouldn't be paid and dolled out on some Garage Fest glossy full-color flyers that had Paulys "Goth Fest" lineup on the reverse side.

So there ya have it. The day of the show six well dressed rock 'n' roll bands and one poorly dressed minivan-driving band show up destined to play at 2 am. It turns out, since Pauly got all these bands to play and everyone is friends with everyone else, the show is pretty well attended — I'd say about fifty or sixty people paid to get in and then when you have freaking seven bands on the bill, that's a guaranteed fifty people forced to be there as well. So at the end of the night, Pauly pays three bands. For some reason I find it hard to believe twenty people said they were there to see even those three and gives the other four bands bupkis. My friend who's in one of the bands that got paid complains that the other bands did not. Personally, I would have just talked to the other two bands that got paid and divided the money up regardless what Pauly decided, but when the show's going till 3 am and every fashion plate band member is running out so they don't have to see the Death Slot bands, not to mention drunk, these kinds of common sense practices don't happen. So I get forwarded Pauly's email the next day. When he realizes that no band in New York is gonna play his next "fest," he puts a weak offer to do the money in a different way next time — well not really, but in a way that won't get him angry emails afterward — and then put this down as a disclaimer.

"I try always to be fair but sorry to say I am long past doing shows just for fun" — this is a business. People who don't like or trust promoters and music business people are in the wrong business. If you can't deal with an outside promoter how are you going to deal with A&R people, labels, managers, etc. — or do you not want to get signed and make a living as a musician?"

Right. Man, don't you wish zines had a laugh track sometimes?

OK, then it comes down to throwing yourself on the Death Slot Pyre. I am not a promoter. I don't put together fests, shindigs, bashes, masquerades, or anything of the kind. But sometimes bands I'm friends with are coming through NYC and they think it's a good idea to play with the SHEMPS, or worse, they think a lot of people in NYC also like to leave their warm apartments to see the SHEMPS. So then I'm put in a position of having to be Poor Sound Pauly. Well, no, I'm not a douchebag, but getting people to come to a show at a club is not easy — you pile on top that most places have an age limit and add on that people who work at the venue actually are there to make money.

So, one, I'm not friends with any band that can draw enough people in NYC to pay a band $75 in gas money. Two, being the promoter, I don't wanna give friends of mine the Death Slot, and Three, being promoter and band member, I can't blame the promoter when my own band gives me shit. So, I get one band I like to play that may actually draw a few people, the out-of-town band I'm doing the favor for, and I give the SHEMPS the Death Slot. I thought I just throw in that this sucks, but then again, if a lot of people came to see us every week, why would we be inclined to write good songs? How am I going to deal with A&R people, labels, managers, etc. — or do I not want to get signed and make a living as a musician? Ha ha, sorry. I really just threw this column together so I could print that guy's quote. I mean, we're talking about people who wear string ties in a non-ironic manner. I'm always amazed at the entertainment people provide me without ever knowing it.

I was getting someplace with this. To the show I went to this past weekend. Another fest, seven bands a night for three nights. Luckily, I threatened this promoter's life last month and he was scared to ask us to play. Well, I didn't threaten his life, but I left him a message that I was gonna come down and throw a live rat into the coffee shop he works at.

If you want to have seven bands play on the same show and have it end at say, 1 am (it's a Sunday night ,for crissakes), you need to do some math. Every band should play for 30 minutes, fuckin crap, every band should really play for 20 minutes; who the hell wants to see the same band for more than 20 minutes anyway? And you need 10-15 minutes for bands to pee and plug their guitars in before they play. So, seven bands equals roughly 315 minutes. OK, quick, what time does the first band go on!? DING! 8 pm at the latest! So I get there at 10:30 figuring I have already missed a few bands. No, the first band is still on — not only that, they just started and are playing for like 45 minutes. The second band goes on. The promoter, realizing its 11:30 already and five more bands need to go on, tells them, play one more. They play 6 more. OK, then you have the band that came from a thousand miles away and are supposed to go on second to last. At midnight, they pull the last minute RIVERCITYREBEL thing (wow, I'm already naming that douchebag move after you guys, you may end up like Chuck Taylor and people will forget there was a band and just think of a rivercityrebel as someone who forces bands to play to nobody) and demand to go on

right now, thus making the headlining band go on right after them and giving the other two bands the 3 am and 3:45 a.m.-on-a-Sunday-night Death Slot. Everyone gets upset, blah blah blah, drama drama drama. Hey, ya know what? Seven bands on one show is a stupid idea. Fests are a stupid idea, the people who go to shows are fucking lame-os — why are we encouraging them by giving them a night of TV when we really should be forcing them to stay at the movie? Fests like Warped even give them a channel changer, where they can go from first stage to third stage…yikes.

Here's some tips

BANDS: Don't play for more than twenty minutes. Your set list should have like nine songs on it (don't play three stupid covers at the end either). If you weren't so fucking boring you wouldn't be complaining no one wants to see you.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPANTS: Only go to fests if they're in your own town. Traveling places only encourages bad bands to think that people are actually gonna show up to see them. If the guy at the door asks you what band you're here to see, tell him, "All of them ,asshole!"

I stop and smile, I take my bow, I leave the stage and then somehow you email me, bill@candids.com

As the politics of fear practiced by our chick-

No.

en-hawk government make them look increasingly like some desperate and crazed serial rapist, holed up in a building with one exit and surrounded by a huge mob bent on extracting their painful revenge, a young person's fancy turns to springtime thoughts of total societal collapse. The question is: How long before it happens, and what form will it take? While the Stay-Puft Marshmallow Man will not likely be taking the form of The Destructor anytime soon, there is much to look for as the world we know slowly crumbles all around us. Remember, cultural change, analogous but not directly related to biological evolution, is a gradual process with occasional bursts of rapid (and usually temporary) acceleration that comes about like the grinding earthquake of a large tectonic shift after millennia of tension-building geological plate subduction. In other words, if you want to watch the world fall apart you have to look for the little things in order to understand when the big things will happen.

Think of it as a game. Tomorrow, when you leave your house, before defaulting into whatever daily routine you embark upon, try to step outside of the ingrained viewpoint that you, as a product of your surrounding culture, are accustomed to. Take a look at these surroundings, and do your best not to simply take different aspects of them for granted or immediately jump to a "pro-" or "anti-" response, or some generalized apathy. There's no need for chemical enhancement—weed or beer or acid or glue or whatnot—as those agents come with their own predictable set of responses that tend toward the euphoric, paranoid and/or ranting end of the spectrum (which block the kind of clarity I'm talking about anyway). You don't need to do yoga or some weird new age hippy bullshit. That stuff is basically the same thing as drugs but a smidgen healthier. Just take a long, sober look at a few different points during the day. It helps to pick a specific vantage point and look from it several times.

When I do this in my increasingly affluent coastal city, and compare it to when I did the same thing a few years ago, I feel profoundly disturbed. Fewer people are happy and the cultural dividing lines are clearer. A look at rush hour traffic shows things that we already thought, but over hours of observation these things demonstrate themselves as more and more consistent. A far larger percentage of expensive SUVs have drivers that exhibit more belligerent, aggressively poorer road etiquette than the drivers of smaller, less pricey vehicles. These are the embittered true middle and upper classes, and they are increasingly separating themselves from the growing working and lower classes as they become mean, paranoid, and conservative, fearful for their livelihoods and the defensibility of their positions within the hierarchy of American life. A look at any newspaper in a box on the corner shows how they are driven further and further into this defensive state by constant proclamations that "our way of life is under attack" in a thousand different headline formats. These screaming pieces of agitprop contrast sharply with neighboring articles about celebrities/entertainment/sports that have absolutely no bearing on our day-to-day lives. There is no middle ground in the newspapers whatsoever.

Cliché or no, it seems really bizarre that so many people just take these obvious media manipulations for granted. In a recent BBC News article, "Is The US Media Too Political?", Jamie Coomarasmy wrote, "I spoke to commuters at Union Station just across the road from Armstrong Williams's [a widely-syndicated conservative news commentator recently exposed as a paid shill for white house policy] office. One man said: "I'm from Ohio so I go back and when I listen to people, the blue collar type person, they take [mass media] for the gospel and so that is sad because they're trusting the media to give them the straight answer and then they just say well the media said it, it's got to be true and that's not necessarily the case." Another woman said: "By and large we all trust the media. The media is our voice between the White House and the rest of the people in the country." But was she ever concerned that she wasn't getting an objective view? "No, I think we receive an objective view most of the time," she said" (Sunday, March 6, 2005). The average overworked, beleaguered commuter, even in a highly "progressive" region such as the one I live in, has neither the time nor the inclination to look for alternative news sources. They live in a world largely defined by the views of those who have the most money to make their message as universally available, convenient, and simplified as possible.

Meanwhile, as the day goes on, young, primarily male members of the underclass take to the roads in a hyper-amplified aspiration to the belligerence of the earlier-rising, embittered middle and upper classes: all bluster and business, yet hobbled by a socio-economic deficit they desperately try to make up for with criminal schemes and a visual and auditory volume to their goings on that screams, "I'm writing my own history! Look at me *now*!" Our large police force is now joined by a bizarre proliferation of gun-toting "private security" forces, hired by landlords and reinforced by unreasonable and probably unlawful housing rules, who help to ensure that the burgeoning lower and working classes are never free from harassment on the road or at home. It is tough to argue with the old cliché of an assessment that these forces of authority are, indeed, there to literally "keep people from coming up." It seems that more and more of them are needed, however, as there is no real safety net in place to keep so many people from falling down. Of course, none of these things are absolutes, and this is just a look at one busy street in Oakland on a weekday. Yet, that the fragility of the shelf that our culture rests upon is so brutally apparent from watching just the cars on a busy city street during the course of one day—a street that could be described as a major artery of this city's bustling economy—is eye-opening. As more and more people are shaved from the middle and dropped down here to be confused and pissed off with the rest of us, it's easy to see how all of this could fall. The aforementioned serial rapist-like expansionist militarism of our current government, when taken as just one part of a much bigger picture of American history, ends up looking more and more like the final descent into madness of a ruthless, much-feared 50-year old stockbroker whose heart goes out from far too many years of far too much cocaine abuse only minutes before the (also aforementioned) angry mob gets to him.

Recommended reading: Jared Diamond's (author of *Guns, Germs and Steel*) new book, *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed*, is a fine study of the buildups, direct and indirect causes, and aftereffects of what happens when "Eternal" civilizations are wiped from the land of the living, leaving only a weathered skeleton to confuse future generations. Entirely worthwhile, even though if you want it right now you'll have to pay like $35 for the hardcover! My advice: shoplift it from Barnes and Noble (thanks for the Christmas present, Kairsten).

—Johnny Mink, johngeek@hotmail.com, PO Box 3026, Oakland, CA 94609

I LOVE LIVING IN THE CITY

So if you're a regular reader of this column—as regular as is possible with the irregularity inherent in its publication, which is erratic due to recent negligence on my part—you'll know I work a lot of different jobs. I went from film festival season last year to traveling, temping, occasional gardening gigs and hauling jobs, back to temping, and now I'm about to head back to the film festival. The past month, however, I've been covering for my friend, J.R., at his job at the dildo factory, because he was finally having his surgery and he'd need some time to recover.

San Francisco is a place where freaks come to die; they generally come in their 20s and teens. I mean this in a lot of different ways. Some of us come, armed with a general disdain for trying to work within the system, and a desire to have enough space to live our lives the way we want. So we get enough stupid tattoos to guarantee that we can never move on because we will never be able to get a job, a house, or anyone to hook up with in another town.

Some come literally to die, to be surrounded by people who understand cynicism and ambivalence towards life, and who drown themselves in booze and drugs and depravation, fuck up their hair and eat the dirt under their fingernails as a nervous habit, and generally just give in willingly. Some of those people who come here to die young manage it, and some just drain out their passion until they are ghosts that walk among us. You know, like the Misfits song.

Then there are those who come here because they have to. J.R. is one of those people who live here because it is the safest place for them to live.

J.R. grew up in the Midwest, where the air was a little bit less fucked up and the people were a little bit less self-conscious, but he came to SF because despite Newsom and the Fajita incident, SF is still where the weird come to be weird, where all versions of queer and trans folks can live out their lives, not under scrutiny and not in obscurity, but just as lives, dressing and identifying pretty much however they want.

J.R. was getting top surgery, full chest augmentation, which he'd wanted for years but hadn't been able to afford. The surgeon was this guy, Dr. Brownstein, who is one of the few surgeons in the country who will perform the procedure. He likes to tell his patients that his niece is in the band Sleater-Kinney. He has a copy of *Transgender Warriors* in the lobby of his office. I leafed through it as I waited for J.R. to have his stitches removed, his wounds inspected.

His friend Heather, and I took turns cleaning the blood out of his drains, helping him eat and drink water, and renting movies as he took Percocet and was still in pain.

We all felt so relieved. He looked so much more comfortable.

SEX TOYS AND PROSTHETIC LIMBS

So J.R. couldn't do his job while he was recovering. He designs, manufactures, and tests "sex toys," from buttplugs that are fun accessories to "packies" used by some as prosthetic limbs. Obviously, they couldn't get a temp to replace him, but they could use an extra hand around the place while other permanent employees took on some of his responsibilities.

This meant putting stickers on things, packing boxes, and stuff like that. I got to work with my old housemate and listen to good music.

The dildo factory was located in a part of San Francisco that is on the borderline between the industrial area and a primarily residential neighborhood. Three blocks east is the main drag of the industrial district, a block away from a neighborhood sandwich shop, on the corner of a block of old Victorians. It is an area hit heavily by the dot-com gold rush of the late 90s/early 00s. A lot of Internet businesses ("I know, I'll deliver rare cheeses from around the world to anywhere in the Bay Area in less than one hour!") folded pretty fast, based on the short-sightedness of their founders. That left a lot of office space empty. So, different types of businesses have moved into those office spaces since, ones that would never have designed their interiors with the particular bizarre indulgent tiki party kitsch that was so dominant in the very early part of this century.

The dildo factory moved into one of those spaces. It has three ground-level offices that had been built inside of a renovated Airstream trailer. Upstairs, one the office's exterior was covered with a 15-foot digital printout of a bowl of tomato soup. I believe the other just had a photo of enormous silverware. The carpet is actually Astroturf. There are hot pink phalluses everywhere.

And so yeah, that's where I was working for the past month, out here in San Francisco, where those who type naked come to die.

*

By the way, if you have an interest in high-quality sex toys, check out Vixen. They carry artisan made products constructed of medical-grade silicone, and they can be sterilized with water. Check them out at www.vixen.com.

P.S. I will probably have a new header in next month's *MRR*. Just keep an eye out for my name.

This column is for the May issue... I'm typing it in early March and it's been one brutal winter. There's about a five-foot snow bank off to the side of our driveway and I'm starting to wonder if that snow will be gone by the time this column sees print. Probably not.

My friend Leo decided he'd had enough of the cold winters and he and his wife high-tailed it out of here earlier this week and moved to Virginia Beach. No offense to you readers from that state, but I just don't get it. Actually, I do understand the logic of wanting warmer weather, and the rents and housing prices down there are considerably less expensive than here. But for crying out loud, it's NASCAR country. He even commented about all the Confederate flags he saw down there when he and his wife took a trip last year to scope it out. I told him to get used to it.

It's not for me. I don't want to live in the Bible Belt. Even though Massachusetts has a strong conservative streak and a right-wing Mormon governor, I like living here. I'd be like a fish out of water anywhere else.

I've known Leo since I was 13 and been friends with since 17. I have to admit, though, that he drives me nuts at times and we really don't have that much in common anymore. Plus, he married a religious fundamentalist who, oddly enough, sports a Betty Page look. She'll be right at home in that environment, with her dumbass pro-life stickers and fish decal on her car. But I'll probably miss the guy anyway. I know that Virginia has produced a ton of great punk and hardcore over the years. Direct Control, who I think are one of the best new bands to emerge in quite some time, come from Richmond and I can't wait for their new album and to finally see them at the Chicago fest, which will have happened by the time you're reading this. But that state is also home to the likes of Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson. Leo said he saw a picture of Robertson in the lobby of the airport when they arrived. If that had been me, I might have jumped on the first plane back to Boston.

I'm thinking of the Bible thumpers because, Jesus motherfucking Christ in hell... the culture warriors are at it again. First off, if I said that phrase on the radio, I could now get slapped with a $500,000 fine. *Jesus motherfucking Christ in hell!* The cowards in the US House of Representatives, in mid-February, approved legislation that raises the fines for on-air radio and TV indecency to $500,000 per offense. The vote was 389 to 38. Even the Democratic congressmen from Massachusetts voted 8-2 in favor of this wretched legislation, with only Barney Frank and Bill Delahunt having the courage to vote against it. A few noteworthy quotes from a CNN story (CNN.com, 2/16/05):

"We would put Big Brother in charge of deciding what is art and what is free speech," said Rep. Jan Schakowsky, D-Illinois, who opposed the bill. "We would see self- and actual-censorship rise to new and undesirable heights," ... "Parents—not the government—are the best judges of what their children should see and hear," said Rep. Henry Waxman, D-California.

Cable television, satellite radio, and Internet webcasts (my mode of broadcasting) aren't covered by this legislation, but you can bet your sweet life the virtuecrats will eventually go after

those as well. In fact, there are rumblings about it already. Senator Ted Stevens from Alaska and Texas Rep. Joe Barton want to apply the same decency standards to cable as to regular broadcast outlets, while also saying no one wants censorship or to restrict free speech. Well, what the fuck do you call legislating these kinds of standards? I don't want some theocrat's interpretation of morality and decency dictating what I can see and hear.

Meanwhile, new Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, the torture fan, seems intent on picking up where John Ashcroft left off. He wants to vigorously pursue obscenity. In a speech to the Hoover Institution at Stanford University, the same right-wing think tank that spawned Condi Rice, Gonzales said, *"People who distribute obscene materials do not enjoy constitutional guarantees of free speech,"* according to an Associated Press report. Of course, once again, what is obscenity? What is the definition? And, oh yeah, he also wants to renew the provisions of the USA PATRIOT Act due to expire by the end of this year. Just wonderful.

Before moving on the record review section, a bit more about that Moron, er, Mormon governor, Mitt Romney. He's already setting himself up for a presidential run by disparaging the state in which he resides and, more egregiously, gay couples and their families. At a recent Republican meeting in South Carolina, Romney said, "Being a Republican governor in a blue state is like being a cattle rancher at a vegetarian convention," and it got huge guffaws from the audience. He's become an increasingly outspoken critic of both gay marriage and civil unions, lamenting the fact that "same-sex couples are actually having children born to them. We've been asked to change their birth certificates to remove the phrase mother and father and replace it with parent A and parent B. It's not right on paper, it's not right in fact. Every child has a right to have a mother and a father." Says who? What gives him the right to define what a "proper" family is?

It got worse when he went to Utah for another Republican meeting: "America cannot continue to lead the family of nations around the world if we suffer the collapse of the family here at home," Romney said, calling the Supreme Judicial Court's legalization of same-sex marriage in Massachusetts "a blow to the family"... "America's culture is also defined by the fact that we are a religious people," Romney said. "We recognize our God not only in our Declaration of Independence, but even in our currency. And we are also unique in that we recognize that the family is the fundamental building block of American society." (Boston Globe, 2/26/05)

Romney used to pass himself off a social moderate, but his true colors are showing more now that he's trying to appeal to the Rethugs' radical religious wing. Beware the wolf in sheep's clothing. Or something like that. In any case, any façade of moderation is quickly disappearing with this guy. It's really sickening... if he doesn't like Massachusetts, he should move the fuck back to Utah... you know, a state with a nice history of polygamy... family values.

LET'S ROCK AND ROLL!!

SNAKEBITE - *Every Bad Idea Is A Good Idea* (Don Giovanni, 7")

Snakebite has released two 7"s within a relatively short time and both are worth seeking out. "Every Bad Idea" is the second installment. A New Jersey band that includes former Down In Flames vocalist Ian. Pissed hardcore/punk, with a whiff of Poison Idea, packing speed, catchy parts here and there (especially for "Cream Of The Crop"), and emotionally frayed vocals. The lyrics express a tremendous amount of anger and cynicism. Blistering shit. (PO Box 15482, Boston, MA 02215, www.dongiovannirecords. com)

SQUARE THE CIRCLE (Kangaroo, 7")

Punishing hardcore from Japan with a throttling, over-the-top sound. A speedy, thrash-driven assault with some US touches as well as the classic Japanese sound. "Desseo Ser Sano" has a breakdown that brings on serious circle-pit urges. Six rippers. (Middenweg 13, 1098 AA Amsterdam, NETHERLANDS. www.geocities. com/tysonkangaroo)

THE AFTERMATH - *Degenerate Fuck Crew* (Firestarter, 7")

A posthumous release for the Aftermath and, although it came from the same session as an earlier EP, this one makes a stronger immediate impression. Matt sounds like a mean cross between John Brannon, Paul Bearer, and the guy from United Mutation. In other words, guttural and angry. Bare-knuckled, brawny arrangements with varying tempos and really packing on the bile. "Nothing's Gonna Change" falters a bit, with a too-fast thrash part, but otherwise, these guys capture an old-school feeling without completely mimicking anything. (2981 Falls Rd., Baltimore, MD, www.firestarterrecords.com)

RAT BASTARDS - *Subvert and Deny* (Kangaroo, 7")

More from Kangaroo. The Rat Bastards, from Chicago, have been around for roughly a decade and still don't seem to get their due. That needs to change. Their second EP in the past several months and it's boiling over and explosive — raw, pillaging hardcore punk and the power-chords fly off the motherfucking rails. There's an error on the first pressing — "Crumbling Down" from the last EP reappears, instead of the listed "Catatonic." Besides that, there are five more originals and a ripping cover of Battalion of Saints' "Second Coming." No time to catch your breath.

(Middenweg 13, 1098 AA Amsterdam, ETHERLANDS. ww.geocities.com/tysonkangaroo)

MIDNIGHT EVILS - *Breakin' It Down* (Estrus, CD)

Another dose of rock 'n' rollin' righteousness here. The Midnight Evils aren't reinventing the wheel but their loud, spirited three-chord blam is a whole lotta fun — weaving together punk, hard rock, garage, and boogie. I mean, it's pretty brazen when you call a song "Party, Party, Party" and do it in straight twelve-bar rave-up structure, but it fuckin' works. "C'mon" is a tambourine-bashing shaker that defies you to stay still. It doesn't sound fossilized — it sounds alive. That's the difference. (PO Box 2125, Bellingham, WA 98227, www.estrus.com)

NEVER ENOUGH - *Dead Set On Destruction* (Organized Crime, CD)

This 27-track CD includes both of the band's 7"s (including the brand new "Give Me Oblivion" EP), a live radio set, and their 2003 demo. Aggressive straight-edge hardcore from Maryland. Truth be told, I'm not into a lot of the newer bands who fly the edge flag but Never Enough does it in intelligent fashion and Tony's outspokenness against Christianity in hardcore is refreshing as well — he lets his point of view on that topic be heard loud and clear during the live segment. The real attraction is the full-on musical assault. Speed, crunch, power, and melody — played with a lean ferocity, just how you want it. (PO Box 213, Brookfield, IL 60513, www.organizedcrimerecords.com)

SMALLTOWN - *The Music* (Deranged/Snuffy Smile, CD)

Gloriously melodic punk music by this Swedish three-piece, and until reading the insert, I had 'em pegged as a UK band. After a series of singles, this is their debut full-length, and the title track cleverly name-checks their influences through lyrical snippets. While Smalltown does owe obvious debt to the likes of the Clash, Jam, Chords, and SLF, as well as early Snuff, they imbue the songs with an appealing brashness that rarely wavers. The harder-driving songs are the most-memorable — "Hooks," "What's Going On," "Warning," and "Upside Down" all have a winning tandem of punchy guitar, bass, and drums, along with solid vocals and harmonies. (www.derangedrecords.com)

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My next two columns will be about record collecting. This month I'm going to talk a little bit about general concepts the way I see them. Next month I'm going to talk about how the Internet has changed record collecting.

Record collecting has been a part of the hardcore/punk culture since the beginning. And after almost three decades of punk and two decades of hardcore, a sizeable subculture of collectors has emerged. By now this subculture stands alongside extant subgroups of collectors such psych, metal, ska/Two Tone/soul, reggae, and 60s garage collectors. Some hardcore and punk records now sell for $1,000 or more on a regular basis. The popularity of collecting punk records seems to be steady, if not growing, and prices continue to trend upwards. Furthermore, as the hardcore/punk styles continue to split into sub-genres and sub-scenes, collecting too

has fragmented into numerous sub-groups. While there are several completists who can boast "every" late 70s or early 80s punk record, I don't think anyone, even MRR, has a "complete" hardcore punk collection up to the present day.

I'd like to start off by addressing some basic concepts. Rarity, value, merit, and price.

Rarity refers to the relative scarcity of a record. The most sought after hardcore records were pressed in very small quantities and distributed poorly. Tour-only releases or records that were sold in a limited geographic area later become much more rare than records that were sold by mail or to stores and distros. This is because dedicated collectors and fans will snag most anything new that turns up in a store or distro, whereas records sold only at gigs are distributed to a group of people less likely to preserve, or place value on a record. This is perhaps why the Fix *Vengeance* EP, which was limited to 200 and sold only on tour and at local gigs, is much more rare than records of a similar vintage and pressing quantity. The rarest records were on small labels or self-released and had very limited press runs. At the time, few people recognized the merit of these bands and their fan base was limited to people who came to their local shows. A few people might have heard their record on MRR Radio or read a review in the zine and sought it out. But a record that wasn't on a label with much distribution or carried by mail order houses of the day will turn out to be much more difficult to track down 20 years later. I've always felt that once a record enters the distribution network it moves down a notch in rarity because it become accessible to foreign and remote collectors, who often have more objective tastes and sniff out good records years before they become popular. Furthermore, a record once in the distribution stream is assigned value and becomes an inventory item, whereas records sold just at gigs may be regarded at the time as having very little value. A good example is the Vile LP, which was by most accounts limited to 300 copies that were given away at a gig by the band placing them under people's windshield wipers in the parking lot. Until an ex-member dug up a box of unplayed stock copies, this record was extremely rare as very few seem to ever have made it to stores much less mail order or wholesale distributors. This means there is little chance that a fan in another city or country ever had a chance to say "hey, this looks cool, I'll order one" and bring the record into the collector scene.

Other records become rare simply because of demand, or influence. I would hazard that most early 80s hardcore records had initial pressings of 2000 or less at the time. Certainly only a handful of bands Black Flag, Dead Kennedys, Seven Seconds, etc. were selling more than 2,000 copies of a record in those days. The majority of those bands, however, have had their fan bases multiply in the tens of thousands since they were released. While many classics have been reissued, the originals are still in demand. This means that a record with a fairly large pressing (say SSD *Get it Away* at 2000 pressed) is now considered to be a rare record.

This is how I would break down rarity for a record of merit more than ten or fifteen years old: Mega Rare records are records pressed in quantities of less than 100. Often only a few copies are known to exist— the Absentees 7" is Mega Rare. Very Rare: records with copies under 500 — Big Boys *Frat Cars*, Fix *Vengeance*, Dicks *Hate the Police* are Very Rare records. Rare records are sought-after records in quantities of 500-1000. This area is a little sketchier because some records with pressings of 2000 are still not too hard to find and others rarely turn up, but you get the idea. I'd say there are very few records pressed in quantities over 2000 that are really rare. Hard to find or expensive, perhaps, but not really that rare in that they almost never turn up anywhere at any price.

Value, merit, and price. These are related but somewhat different concepts. A record might have all three in abundance or just one or two. Value is the inherent worth a person puts on a record, independent of its price. Many people might have records because they are cool, because they remind a person of a place and time, or have some other relevance to a person's life. A record that was playing at a really great party, or when you first hooked up with your true love, or bought at a really fun show, might have great value to you even if it is not rare or expensive.

Similar but not quite the same is merit. Records that don't sell for much money might still have much merit. Price goes up and down but merit remains. Great music is great music in any time period. While some records may be more or less value or higher or lower priced as trends change, people who are fans of music tend to keep records they feel have merit based on their own objective artistic and musical standards. Collectors who are fans foremost have a knack for picking records with merit out of any musical movement, scene or trend. While these records may have little value or low price at the time, these tend to be the records that become highly collectible later based on their merit.

For example, some of the greatest bands have gone totally unrecognized in their own time. A handful of people saw the merit in these records and maybe years later their recording become better known and soon hundreds or even thousands of people are seeking out these records that at one time no one cared about. This is the process followed by many of the classic Killed By Death punk 7"s of the late 70s and early 80s. Many of these bands were totally unknown or not taken seriously at the time. People placed very little value on their records. But a handful of collectors (often from overseas and unprejudiced by actually knowing/seeing the bands) saw the merit in their recordings. Years later these collectors compiled many of these records onto mix tapes and LPs and the music was rediscovered. In this process the merit inherent in the records is established and the process of their compilation also increases their perceived value. I'm not necessarily saying every record on a reissue comp has much merit, but you get my point. How many times have you heard an older punk who is astonished at the price a record is selling for say something like, "I remember when no one cared about that band," or, "there was a stack of those for fifty cents at the record store and we threw them out." Those records didn't have much value to most people at the time. But a handful of collectors saw their merit and later revived them. Another corollary of the idea of value is the authenticity of a record. An original press, show-only variant, test pressing or color vinyl record is given greater value to a collector than a run-of-the-mill copy. The more unique, original, limited in quantity or availability a record is, the higher most collectors will value it, while the music, of course, remains the same. This concept of value is why most collectors aren't satisfied with MP3s, CD-Rs, or reissues. They want the original, authentic artifact.

Price is an easier concept, as it is simple economics of supply and demand. It is related to price and merit but not always. Records that aren't that good sometimes sell for outrageous prices. A good example is the five-figure Hugh Beaumont Experience 7", which is really not that good. But it's very rare and despite it's lack of merit, has been assigned great value and hence commands a high price. Furthermore, a record that is not that old or rare, Judge- *Chung King Can Suck It* sells for $1000-$2000 regularly because it is fetishized by a high-dollar, high turnover segment of the collector scene. Its price is much, much higher than should be expected. Misfits records are in a category all their own, as they are the subject of a collector subculture that is fanatical and big spending. Their price is far out of line with records from the same period of similar or greater merit pressed in the same quantities.

Until recently only a few collectors in America saw the merit in foreign hardcore. All through the late 80s and early 90s only a small sub-cult of collectors were really fired up about old Japanese and Scandinavian hardcore records. As a result, many people my age bought what are now very high priced records for next to nothing on a regular basis. In the late 80s and early 90s many distributors went out of business and or dumped their hardcore overstock to move into dance music, indie, death metal, or grunge. Anyone my age can tell you about the golden age of fifty-cent MG-15 and Anti Cimex 7"s. At the time most people placed a really low value on foreign hardcore thrash. The big thing was Sub Pop, or to quote an early MRR Scumpit article, "bands that Youth of Today or Metallica wear T-shirts of." But a lot of people like me saw the merit in those records and snagged them up. Over time tastes have changed and more people have come to value these records. As a result they now command very high prices. Some hardcore stuff is still undervalued, German, East European and South American hardcore is just starting to rise in price as more collectors start to mine the vinyl output of these scenes. And some records with very limited distribution have become much more widely known only recently thanks to compilations, bootlegs, and reissues.

There was a time when no one took the Jersey Shore bands on Mutha Records seriously at all. These records had a very low value placed on

them by collectors and reviewers at the time. Tastes and times have changed, however, and these records have become some of the rarest and most sought after hardcore records. Despite being advertised in MRR, it seems very few of these releases made it outside a small scene in New Jersey. And few of these people seem to have placed a high value on the records as very few seem to have been saved.

Some records command a high price only for a short time based on trends or fads in music. Often, these records are highly valued by a group of people, but have very little merit. When this group of people outgrows hardcore/punk the music they valued tends to lose its value with them. Lacking merit, it has little to recommend itself to future music fans or collectors, so never regains its price. I hate to be unkind, but I think a lot of the records being "jocked" right now will suffer this fate when their college age fan base hits 30.

Furthermore, when supply is altered, price can be dramatically affected regardless of value or merit. The best example of this is when an ex-band member unearths a box of unplayed stock copies and puts them on the market. Once word gets out that there a batch has been discovered, collectors will snatch them up, but the supply-driven price is sure to drop. This sort of thing is usually quite temporary and prices even out. For example, there was a guy selling unplayed stock copies of the Authorities *Soundtrack For Trouble* EP out of a classified ad in this zine about 13 years ago for $8 or so each. Despite a box of mint stock copies coming onto the market at a reasonable price, this record, based on its merit, has risen in price quite a bit since this incident.

I'd like to further illustrate these ideas with a case study: UK punk. In the early 80s ,the UK had one of the biggest and most prolific punk/hardcore scenes on earth. Its output was staggering — tons of records were produced from '77 to '83. Many of these releases were on very well distributed labels, exported widely, and pressed in large quantities. I'm thinking in particular of Clay, Riot City, No Future, Crass and Mortarhate labels and releases. In the early 90's these records were quite in demand and had risen in price quite a bit. However, the fact that the UK's scene declined greatly in the late 80s and early 90s meant that the supply of classic punk records was quite large. Dealers began buying up old UK records for export to the US and Japan and for a while prices were going up. With the advent of the Internet, however, it was easier than ever for ex-punks and record dealers in the UK to sell their records; supply has caught up somewhat to demand at this point. As a result, many classic UK punk records now often sell for much less than they did ten years ago. Regardless of price, these records have merit. UK punk is relatively undervalued right now. Collectors are pushing past the Partisans and Icons of Filth 7"s to get to Japanese and Scandinavian rarities. The merit of these recordings is undeniable, though, and over time their prices will probably start to rise again as the music is rediscovered by future generations of collectors.

Another factor that Ryan Richardson has pointed out in these pages is records that originate from first time buyers and records that originate from collectors. Records that had little value when new are often lost to the world quickly. I can imagine large chunks of initial pressings of hardcore punk records that went to non-collectors who didn't place much value on vinyl winding up in garbage dumps across America. Years later when collectors come to value these records often the only reliable source of copies is tracking down ex members of bands. When word gets out to ex-members, fans, and friends that a record they paid three dollars or less for is selling for hundreds of dollars, most are happy to unload all their extra copies. Once most all copies are out of the hands of first-time owners and in the hands of collectors, however, they will forever be assigned a higher value based on what the person paid for the record. As hardcore/punk grows older, the base of collectors gets younger and more and more of the classic records move from first time owners to secondary or later owners. These collectors will be more reluctant to let their records go for less than they paid for them, thus driving their price and also perceived value higher. Ryan feels, and I agree, that this is a factor that underlies the rapid price inflation of the Internet era. Something we will discuss further next month.

Next I'd like to talk a bit about my approach to collecting and how I think anyone can build an awesome collection.

Most people's record collections are not made up of highly collectible records they bought for huge sums on eBay. Their collections are made up of records they bought new when released, or soon after. Many people with outstanding record collections have never bought any record priced above the normal new record price of the day. They are just avid fans of music who detect the merit in each release as it comes out and add it to their collection. Over time this collection grows larger and individual records in it rise and fall in price and relative value. One way to build an awesome record collection is to just be a dedicated fan of music and buy all the new records you like and stick with it for life. Many years later people will be stunned when they see records that sell for $200 or $300 in your collection with $3 price tags on them. They have internalized the price and value judgments of their time period while you just bought the record because it was good then and it's good now. If you follow music with a passion and are a true fan over the years your collection will grow; that's the simple, old-fashioned way to get an awesome collection.

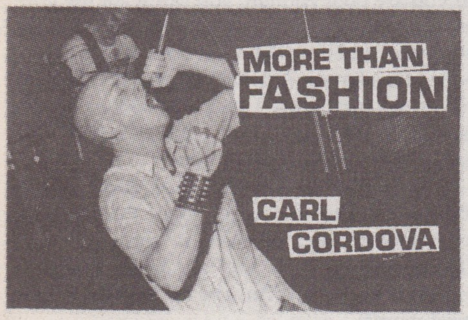
Other than just a passion for music, I think the main skills for record collecting are knowledge and dedication. Knowledge is by far the most important. Read and learn as much as you can about music and records. Listen to other collectors, read zines new and old, listen to MRR and other radio shows. Listen to your parents' and older siblings' records. Check out records from the library and listen to your friends' records. The more knowledge you are armed with, the better your collecting will go. You can go far by learning a lot about what records outside the area you collect are sought after. If you are already spending a lot of time at record stores and other places records are sold having a lot of knowledge means you can spot records other collectors are looking for that you might not want for yourself but can sell or trade. Amassing a brain full of record trivia means you can instantly tell the difference between bootlegs and reissues, first and second press and know pressing and sleeve variations. In the 80s I had a minimal knowledge of foreign hardcore. I read MRR and listened to the radio show. But a lot of the time I just bought every punk-looking record I could find that was from Sweden, Finland, Italy, or Brazil. At the time these records were not valued in the US, and I got some great stuff at bargain prices. Even the scant knowledge I had was more than anyone else combing the record bins in those days and this paid off when I got home and listened to the records. Knowing a lot about bands, scenes and labels is important. Knowing about roots and influences also deepens your understanding of music and enhances the listening experience. Knowledge is another factor greatly affected by the Internet that I'll talk more about next month.

Dedication is the other important factor to collecting. The key to finding the records you want is to spend a lot of time looking. And more often than not the key to finding the records you are looking for at a good price is looking where other people aren't. Despite the high prices being paid on eBay for rare records these days, you still routinely hear stories about rare and valuable records found at garage sales or used record stores for next to nothing. This is where having the knowledge pays off for the person dedicated enough to spend a lot of time looking.

There is an apocryphal story of Pig Champion going to every record store in every town where the Fix had toured until he found a copy of the *Vengeance* 7". But dedication is the key to finding good scores. Here's a good illustration of what I'm talking about. If you really wanted a copy of Naked Raygun's *Flammable Solids* 7" you could probably pay several hundred dollars for one on eBay pretty easily. But if you were dedicated you could go to every store in Chicago once or twice a week and track down ex-band members, old scenesters, and DJs as well as go to garage sales, thrift stores, used book stores, junk shops, etc. for years and probably find several copies of the same 7" for a fraction of the price. Almost no one dedicates their whole life to finding just one record in such a fashion. But if you approach collecting with this diligence and have a good base of knowledge you will find many great rare records at a bargain. Even if these are records you don't want to keep, you can always trade or sell them to other collectors to fuel your own habit. The more knowledge and dedication you have, the greater your collection will grow over time.

And important corollary of dedication is patience. I could probably buy every record on my want list on eBay over the next calendar year. However, I choose not too. I have had some records on my want list for close to 15 years. I

know that I will get these records eventually, and at a price that I think is right. This means being patient and dedicated. I have paid large sums for some records, but never more than I though the records were worth, and I can never really say I paid "too much" for a record. However, I know lots of people who have buyer's remorse about records they bought impulsively on eBay at prices greater than they can sell them for now. If you are patient and keep looking, you will eventually find every record you are looking for and never feel that you paid more than you should have. The records are out there, and like the holy grail of Arthurian legend, it is our quest to seek them out. To find them will take great effort, but the reward is made that much greater by the ordeal.



The other day my roommate and I were listening to *Those Who Fear Tomorrow* and playing Count the Beards in *Heartattack* when we realized that we needed a vacation. His spring break was coming up, and I had extra time off from work. It had been awhile since I visited my relatives in Cincinnati, and Chicago Fest was coming up, so Britton and I decided that Ohio would be the logical starting point for our adventure. More importantly, we chose Cincinnati because it's only a four hour drive from the INTEGRITY reunion in Cleveland. We are both on an INTEGRITY kick right now, so we figure this will satiate our need for Mischa. More on this adventure next month.

Something new that I am incorporating into this month's column is a brief interview with a band that I deem worthy of your attention. This month, I got to sit down with Ross, the singer for Northern California's CEREMONY. Hopefully these short interviews will become a periodic standard (depending on my motivation to carry a tape recorder around with me at shows). Stay tuned for a possible Dwid from INTEGRITY interview…

Upcoming Releases

The kids in Los Angeles have definitely been prolific these past few months. While not playing in INTERNAL AFFAIRS, Todd and Corey On have started another band called SNAKE EYES, which sounds very similar to RIGHT BRIGADE and/or later CARRY ON. The music and recording are top notch, but I could do without the manner in which the vocals were recorded—one line at a time—because you lose a lot of the natural raw energy that one gets from recording your vocals all at once. The fact that I can hear each line overlapping the other really bothers me. Regardless, if you are a fan of any of these guys' previous outings, then you will not be disappointed. You can get the demo through www.1917records.com.

As mentioned in last month's column, Todd and Aram from CHAMPION are putting their finishing touches on their "ghost" project, which is now officially entitled BETRAYED. Anthony Pappalardo from IN MY EYES/TEN YARD FIGHT will be doing the artwork for the 6 song EP, which is scheduled to be released on Bridge 9 Records at the beginning of this summer. If you like VERBAL ASSAULT or DAG NASTY, then look into this.

Demo Reviews

I had the fortune of seeing IRON AGE in San Antonio when OUR TURN was out there, and I was surprised at how tight and powerful they were live considering it was only their first show. They did a great OUTBURST cover that night—a great indication of their influences in general. Much like their live performance, I hear a lot of RAW DEAL/KILLING TIME on the demo, with a little CRO-MAGS thrown in for good measure. Jason from FAR FROM BREAKING handles vocal duties, which are more yelled than full-out growled like Joseph or Comunale. While the recording seems a little raw (such is life with a cassette demo), IRON AGE's music still fucking smokes. And I am sure the production will be stronger on the LP, slated for release on Youngblood. You can order the demo by contacting them at ironagetx@hotmail.com.

Next up we have a demo by a new California band coming out of the North Bay called CEREMONY. I can't ask for more in a cassette demo: the layout is top notch, it includes a lyric sheet, and the music is fucking great. CEREMONY play ultra-fast hardcore with a modern twist and go into the occasional breakdown. The first thing that comes to my mind is INTERNAL AFFAIRS, but Ross sounds more like Ryan George than Corey Williams. While the lyrics are violent, bitter, and angry, Ross seemed the opposite when I got to sit down and chat with him about the band. Here is what he had to say about CEREMONY:

Carl: How many shows have you guys played so far, and how has the response been?

Ross: Two shows. Our first show was at the Phoenix Theatre with COLD WORLD, BLACKLISTED, LIGHTS OUT, INTERNAL AFFAIRS, and ALLEGIANCE. We played in the lobby, and the response was pretty intense for our first show, considering the demo had only been out for a month and a half. Kids were crashing into each other, diving, it was a huge frenzy. It was really fun.

Carl: Is it true that all the lyrics were written while you were in jail?

Ross: Yeah, its true. I have been doing graffiti since I was really young. One of the reasons I moved from the North Bay to SF was to mess around with painting. Four months ago I got popped. I was in jail for 14 days, and while I was in there I wrote the lyrics to the demo. I think that's why all the lyrics are so vulgar and angry.

Carl: Who writes the music for CEREMONY?

Ross: Everyone in the band contributed something, but it was mostly Justin Davis and Anthony Anzaldo.

Carl: I am really impressed by the drumming on this demo, especially the speed. How old is the drummer?

Ross: He's fifteen. He's a gnarly kid.

Carl: Given that most of your lyrics seem pretty bitter, what keeps you here? What keeps you involved?

Ross: (minute pause) That's a hard one, Carl… I've always been attracted to the anger and vulgarity in hardcore and punk. But at the same time I appreciate all different kinds of music.

Carl: You can find anger and vulgarity on MTV. Name other things that keep you excited about hardcore and punk.

Ross: Ah man, now you got me thinking about this shit, and I don't want to sound cliché. It's the one true thing in my life. It's honest.

Carl: Most of CEREMONY's members are in other established North Bay bands, how serious are they about CEREMONY?

Ross: At this point, pretty serious. All the people in the band want to push it as far as we can. We are all pretty juiced about it.

Carl: What lies ahead for CEREMONY? Has anyone shown any interest in putting out a record by you guys?

Ross: We don't really care. We just want to play shows. Just seeing kids singing along to us, to see that look in their eyes, that's a great feeling. We want more of that. I want more of that.

Carl: I am going to say two phrases, and you are going to say the first thing that comes to your mind... California hardcore.

Ross: Not enough credit.

Carl: CARRY ON reunion.

Ross: I'll go, but I won't be losing my shit.

You can get a CEREMONY demo by writing to xceremonyx@yahoo.com.

Please send the *Humanity is the Devil* 10" on pink vinyl, and other limited records to: Carl Cordova, 746 Baker Street, San Francisco, CA 94115. ih8thekids@gmail.com

TOP TEN OF MAY

INTEGRITY – Everything
IRON AGE – Cassette demo
CEREMONY – Cassette demo
FUCKED UP - Live
BULLETS IN – Live
Midwest Spring Break 2005
LIGHTS OUT – Untitled LP
INTERNAL AFFAIRS - Live
DE LA SOUL – Stakes Is High
BETRAYED - EP

Dude, writing a column is fuckin' easy!!!

I think by this point in my career as a columnist it should be painfully obvious, even to such ill-bred beasties as you, that I would be lying if I

said writing a column is easy. Perhaps some of you have been living in some sort of fantasy town where wine flows like beer and columnists are constantly drunk and bloated with righteous column ideas. Maybe this is the Shangri-la where Mike Thorn is now living as a hermit. But really, such a town only exists in the LiveJournal entries of attention starved twenty-somethings with penchants for bad poetry and animated emoticons. Perhaps you should have listened to your parents—god help them—when they told you to get your head out of the sand and/or clouds. And while you're at it, perhaps you should get a real job and stop dressing like a rejected cast member of *Road Warrior.* But I digress.

It's been a pretty rough week for your dear Mantooth. Midterms have arrived at the University of Pittsburgh, which means an endless amount of steaming manure has been funneled down my britches in the form of essays, exams, and other assorted tasks that can be likened to a variety of excrements. I work as a tutor at the University's Writing Center, which means I am an indispensable dispenser of writerly knowledge to the fine undergraduate and graduate students at Pitt. Perhaps this gives you some new dimension to my vast psyche, which, as it should have by now become quite clear, is decorated with sparkling egotisms and oozing with grammar anilities. It also might give you something to make fun of me about on the Internet because I chronically never proof-read these before I send them to Golnar, let alone feign any interest in what is commonly called "coherence" and "sense." I don't even know if anilities is the right word to use there. I have grown far too lazy to even check my dictionary. Anyway…

Working as a tutor, besides a brief stint as a bronzed lifeguard, has been one of the best jobs I've ever had. I've been a working class yob since the age of 14, adhering to the advice handed down to me by those wise sages Hard Skin, and most of my jobs have been more or less total shitstorms. My first job was washing dishes at a pizza parlor that also served cocaine out of the freezer. I thought it was a special brand of dough they put in the pizza until I saw one of the cooks putting it up his nose off the cutting board. But I still love pizza, and this is precisely what my column will be about this month.

No it won't. This month's column will have nothing to do with pizza, although I really wish I could muster the strength to write a lot of words about pizza. How many precisely I'm not so sure since I've long since forgotten my word limit due to copious listening of the Showcase Showdown. And this is precisely what my column will be about this month: the Showcase Showdown and how they are the best band to come out of Boston in the past 20 years. Next to the August Spies.

Anyhow, I would also be lying if I said that all the students that come to me with their papers are not complete and utter buffoons, or that I give a toss about their petty ideas, which are dwarfed by my vast intellect, discussed above. I typically work with personal statements from Susie Soandso or Delta Delta Dumbass about how her said sorority has provided countless adventures through time and space to discover the meaning of cake or shitty beer or whatever the hell young people fuck these days.

Occasionally some enlightened champion of learning will come to me with his or her grand ol' idea about the way the world works. Did you know that gays are ruining The Family? It's true. I read it in an ass-wiped essay of some young chap with acne on his eyelids. Not that having acne on one's eyelids is a sign of mind numbing conservative stupidity, but witnessing a particularly oozing case of such left my vast intellect, already discussed above, scarred and maimed. I used to be like you once. In fact, I read one of these essays right before I wrote last month's column, which I have been told reads like something Stalin would have written. Not necessarily subject-wise, but stylistically. I think this is total crap because I don't speak Russian nor do I sport a snappy mustache.

Another paper I recently discussed went where no college student has gone before. A student came to me with an eight-page paper (single spaced), which was supposed to be a discussion of the movie *Trekkies* in relation to an essay written by, I believe, the late Susan Sontag (note to readers: Susan Sontag really did die, unlike many people who I've previously claimed have died, such as Gilbert Gottfried and Mike Thorn). Instead this student decided to muster that can-do, independent spirit of our forefathers, that same wondrous feeling that dumped a bunch of British tea into the Boston harbor and also resulted in the recording of the greatest album of all time, *Appetite of Kings* by the Showcase Showdown. Perhaps this student is originally from Boston. But instead of following the assignment, this academic anarchist smashed to fuck the fucking system by writing eight pages on why trekkies are stupid nerds and need to totally get with it and stop acting like such stupid nerds. I told him the paper was amazing and that he shouldn't make any changes lest the most perfect paper ever construed by any single individual would be irrevocably tainted.

I was supposed to help Thorn edit his resume, but I told him that he was no longer the boss of me and politely flaked out of my promise. If anyone out there would like me to look over any of their writing and have me flake out, send me an email at gregory.mantooth @gmail.com.

By the way, I'm on Spring Break right now, kicking my feet up on the sands of Cancun. I've drunk all the liquor with fancy little umbrellas and have had a constant erection because I overdosed on special Spring Break edition Viagra. Later, Negative Tom and I are going to go have a BBQ on the beach. Some muscle-clad ne'er-do-well will kick sand in my face because I've got such puny arms. Tom is going to be so ashamed to be seen with such a pasty pansy, too concerned with building his vocabulary and not his pectorals, that he will walk off with the bully where undoubtedly he will be given crates of rare records for no other reason than he is a swell dude. Tom, if you're reading this, I'm going to send away for the Misfits workout video and get huge muscles, and I'm going to win you back.

So in conclusion, writing columns is not as easy as it looks, pizza is delicious, and the Showcase Showdown was a great band.

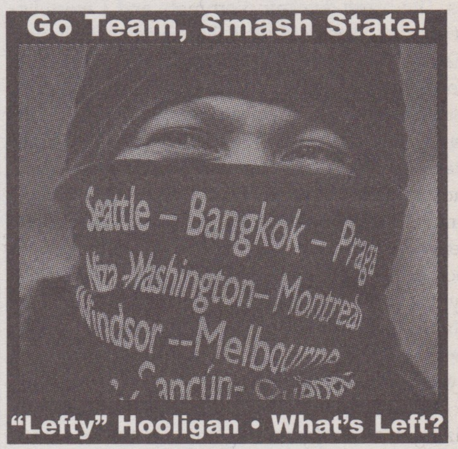
Endnotes:

– Suburban Death Machine has a love for 80s hardcore and is awfully angry about something. They also have a 7" out and you should pick it up even though it doesn't sound like that band that I've mentioned many, many times already. Send an email to couscousisontheloose loose@hotmail.com to check availability. I believe there are only 500 copies.

– College can be a wonderful experience filled with golden memories and lasting friendships. If you are poor enough, you can scam the government into giving you lots of grant money and you can blow it all on records and pizza.

– I wrote a few months back about my friend Ed who had his Crossed Out shirt stolen by the singer of the band Curse, Chris Colohan. He still has not gotten his shirt back.

– Last month I said I would talk about microbrews, but I totally forgot about that promise and now it is too late. Go out and try to find Troeggs "Nugget Nector." It's an Imperial IPA and it is very tasty. Perhaps I'll talk about beer next month.



The generation starship is a well-worn concept in science fiction. If Einstein was right and the speed of light is the cosmic limit, then how might humanity colonize the stars? By building an enormous starship to house a completely self-contained, self-sufficient human society. The original crew lives, produces offspring, and dies in transit, with the whole colony arriving at their destination many generations later.

A much-overused treatment of this theme is that the entirely closed human society aboard such a starship gradually forgets its larger colonizing mission over the generations. Science becomes religion, history becomes mythology, knowledge becomes belief, and technical skill becomes ritual as the starship becomes their whole universe. Not everything is always passed down from one generation to the next, however, so knowledge is lost and skills are forgotten. Parts of the ship are damaged or its systems break down, but the humans are no longer able to make repairs. Increasingly, solutions are

jury-rigged, and these makeshift solutions become how things were always done. The descendents of the would-be colonists arrive at their destination little better than savages and either sail right past it, unable as they are to pilot their starship, or park automatically in orbit, oblivious to their new home and the original intention to colonize it.

This sci-fi scenario is actually an apt metaphor for the devolution of the 1960s New Left into today's leftover Left. Once again I digress from my stated intention to critically examine socialism in general and Marxism in particular. The New Left, no less than the Old Left to which it was reacting, has a dubious relationship to authentic socialism and Marxism. The leftover Left's relationship to them is nonexistent. This sorry-assed residual Left needs to be exposed as a delusional form of pseudo militancy that functions to divert and disrupt any truly radical response to the power of capital. First we need to see how the New Left became the leftover Left. "Always historicize!" as Frederic Jameson is fond of saying.

The New Left is often associated with the early days of Students for a Democratic Society, and the disaffected liberalism of SDS's Port Huron Statement in 1962 can be understood in the context of the broader civil rights movement and "ban the bomb" agitation of the day. The rise of an anti-Vietnam War movement, the turn of important elements of the civil rights movement first to black power and then to revolutionary nationalism, and the emergence of a nebulous youth revolt elevated to the status of counterculture were all to come. Also yet to come were women's and gay liberation, the ecology movement, the spread of revolutionary nationalism to other peoples of color as part of the emergence of "Third Worldism," even a much-neglected wildcat labor movement; all were in effect by the time SDS shattered into a handful of Marxist-Leninist splinters in 1968-69. Quite a heady and heterogeneous mixture of revolt to try to encompass under any single rubric or organization, a fact not disguised by mythologizing 1968 or by calling this welter of social unrest The Movement. An often-ignored point about the demise of SDS at this pinnacle of revolt is that there were two other major political responses to the spirit of revolution in the air that came out of SDS's ashes besides the ML one, those being democratic socialism and anti-authoritarianism.

By the start of 1970 then there was a rather lengthy shopping list of issues that any self-respecting leftist organization felt duty-bound to buy. Many of these were inherited from the ML/social democratic-dominated Left, old and new, but most derived from the extremely heterogeneous uprising known as the '60s. The following listing is by no means comprehensive, and a single term often encompasses several related issues. Racism, for instance, includes the topics of white supremacy and white skin privilege, as sexism covers patriarchy and male privilege. Finally, the terms of debate have changed since 1970 so that when people nowadays talk about global north versus global south, for instance, they're revising the discussion about imperialism and the Third World. So here goes: capitalism, imperialism, the working class, labor unions and parties, third party movements, electoral politics in general, real existing socialism, socialism in general, the state, nationalism, national liberation struggles, the Third World, racism, cultural or revolutionary nationalism, sexism, homophobia, radical separatism, self-determination, the draft, the war, non-violence and pacifism, bread-and-butter jobs and welfare issues, the elderly, youth and youth culture, drug use and decriminalization, vegetarianism, environmental destruction, ecology, animal rights.

Leftists worth their salt felt obligated to define and stake out a position on these and numerous other subjects, producing long boring lists called "points of unity" that read like Catholic catechisms. For this column I'm not much concerned with the democratic socialist tendency in the '60s that became social democracy. Exemplified by the New American Movement, which merged with the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee to become the present-day Democratic Socialists of America, these folks have either fully integrated themselves into the Democratic Party as its left wing, or opted for third party electoral politics—both rather conventional and uninteresting. Instead, I'll concentrate on the self-proclaimed revolutionary Leninist and anti-authoritarian tendencies to sketch out the transformation of a dynamic New Left into the brain dead leftover Left. To help with this, I will employ a conceptual lens—the dichotomy between form and content, process and substance—to sharpen the perspective.

Let's begin with Marxism-Leninism. A surprisingly large portion of the post-New Left Left claimed the ML mantle by 1970, including the explicitly antirevisionist alphabet soup of organizations called the New Communist Movement, the quasi-Maoist Progressive Labor Party, and the Third Worldist Weather Underground (all from the breakdown of SDS), in addition to a mushrooming cloud of Trotskyist sects of which the Socialist Workers Party was the biggest. The Communist Party-USA is not included in this camp, for while nominally ML it had thrown its weight behind social democracy by the 70s. All shared a common Leninist vulgarization of the Marxist base/superstructure concept that contended that every social ill and evil—from poverty, crime, and ignorance to racism, sexism, and homophobia—were solely a product of the capitalist mode of production, which would evaporate once capitalism was overthrown and replaced with socialism. Much of the above list of issues was reduced to a series of questions in true catechistic fashion, as in the black nation question, the national question, the women question, the ecology question, *ad nauseam*, with perhaps one of these questions considered paramount, as with the New Communist Movement's insistence that fighting racism and building multi-racial political organizations was central to the task of vanguard party building.

The process was straight—democratic centralism, criticism/self-criticism, political reeducation—and the substance was narrow—further degradations of Marxist-Leninist ideology through the vulgarizations of Stalin, Trotsky, Mao, Castro, Hoxha, Kim Il Sung, Avakian, Klonsky, Baraka, *et al*, in an ever more sectarian search for the correct political line, the true vanguard party, and the status of "the real Marxist-Leninists," as Max Elbaum puts it in his book *Revolution in the Air*. Thus the diverse resistance, rebellion, and revolt of the 60s was to be straight-jacketed with a crude dogma, disciplined to the needs of building a vanguard party, harnessed to the task of fomenting socialist revolution lead by the true party with the correct dogma. The form was set, the content was crucial, and it was the ever more sectarian struggle over which organization or party had the correct political line that proved to be the hallmark of post-New Left Leninism. Using a Maoist formulation, Elbaum labels this ultra-sectarianism "ultraleftism" and counts it an important internal factor, alongside external factors like China's reactionary foreign policy, contributing to the demise of his beloved New Communist Movement. I'll discuss the decline of 60s radicalism shortly. For the moment note that Loren Goldner's review of Elbaum's book "Didn't See The Same Movie" (http://home.earthlink.net/~lrgoldner/elbaum.html) is a sufficient antidote to *Revolution in the Air*'s eminently forgettable tale of Stalinism gone belly up. Goldner exposes Elbaum's narrow and skewed perspective on the Leninist scene, as well as on larger political realities, and reveals the "true historic ultra-left" of which Elbaum is clueless but that was very much alive in 1970.

I've often debated the merits of including the ultra-left of Pannakoek, Gorter, Bordiga, Mattick, and Korsch in the anti-authoritarian category. It's not as if the self-proclaimed anti-authoritarian milieu wasn't nebulous enough in the 70s, what with post-scarcity Bookchinites flanked on one side by a whole slew of traditional anarchist types like the syndicalist Wobblies and followers of Borsodi's green mutualism, and on the other side by a welter of anarchist countercultural crosspollinations in the form of Yippies, White Panthers, Diggers, and Motherfuckers This was all seasoned with a scattering of anarcho-pacifist and non-violent direct action types like myself in 1968. I've described my evolution from that position through revolutionary left anarchism to present-day left communism in a past column. What I'm pointing out at the moment is the key difference in the anti-authoritarian approach. While there were anarchists who insisted that The State, instead of Capitalism, was the source of all evil, the tendency among anti-authoritarians was to deny any center, or overarching unity, to the political issues of the day. The anti-authoritarian milieu was the most receptive to the freewheeling, multi-dimensional character of 1960s rebellion. But the shopping list above became a nebulous free-floating cloud: all struggles equally important, all oppressions equally legitimate, all political points of view equally valid. When there is little or no attempt to define and prioritize con-

tent, form comes to the fore. The anti-authoritarian milieu was pioneering the affinity group form, small-group process and consensus decision-making that would become part of the toolkit that the leftover Left uses to sidestep issues of content and substance today.

But I'm getting ahead of myself.

Different people had different scenarios, but almost everybody assumed that the rebellious spirit of the 60s would continue to spread, sparking insurgency in the working class, and eventually infecting every corner of American society until social revolution was inevitable. The reason that this never materialized is no mystery. One of the principle engines driving discontent in this country was the Vietnam War, opposition to which directly or indirectly fueled almost every other struggle at the time. Nixon ended the draft and began Vietnamizing the war in 1972, effectively taking the wind out of the Left's sails. The democratic socialist, ML, and anti-authoritarian tendencies on the Left were all faced with dwindling into irrelevancy or transitioning into some other line of political work in order to survive well before the US made its embarrassed retreat from Vietnam in 1975.

For democratic socialism, the transition was to social democracy. Adherents worked within the Democratic Party or for some third party movement, and placed their faith in progressive electoral politics. The ML response was more complex. That part of the ML left represented by the New Communist Movement tried transitioning to multiracial working class organizing and failed miserably, winding up replicating democratic socialism's turn to social democracy via Jesse Jackson's Rainbow Coalition before the New Communist Movement petered out altogether. Elbaum's book is essentially "hundreds of pages on the wars of sects and ideologies" analyzing that demise in excruciating detail. Trotskyism had better success returning to its mainstay of working class organizing, the best example being the International Socialist intervention that became Teamsters for a Democratic Union and the election of Ron Carey as the Teamsters president.

Anti-authoritarianism had even greater success, considering its modest status to begin with, moving on as it did to the anti-nuclear movement. The various attempts to shut down the construction of the Seabrook nuclear power plant in the latter half of the 70s were a crucible in which tactics for mass nonviolent direct action were tested. Affinity group/spokescouncil structures, meeting stacks to keep outspoken people from dominating, and decentralized mass consensus process were practices from Seabrook that were familiar to people in the streets of Seattle over twenty years later. The collapse of Communism with the fall of the Soviet bloc between 1989 and 1991—a severe setback for the Left whether Leninist or social democratic—has had the paradoxical effect of emboldening anti-authoritarian forces as the only remaining opposition and last line of resistance to the status quo. To the Black Bloc *enfant terrible* of the anti-globalization movement, anarchism is little more substantive these days than the circle A spray painted on some Starbucks window. Anarchist process, by contrast, rules the day.

Oddly enough, Elbaum's New Communist Movement hasn't entirely faded from the scene. Instead, it lives on in a very much attenuated form, via the anti-authoritarian milieu, through anarchists with vanguard envy. Self-proclaimed revolutionary anarchists associated with the now defunct Love and Rage Newspaper/Network/Federation, or at least those who proclaimed the centrality of the struggle against racism and for building multiracial political organizations in Chris Day's faction of that organization, declared the historical limits of anarchism and opted for the mass line post-Maoist politics of the Freedom Road Socialist Organization. The anencephalic Chris Crass, also very much into the revolutionary and anti-racist labels, uncritically cheerleads for national liberation struggles, insists on sycophantically following the leadership of Third World peoples of color, and even declares the benefits of electoral politics, all the while calling himself an anarchist and keeping a straight face. Like Chris Day before him, Chris Crass is an unabashed admirer of the New Communist Movement's accomplishments in multiracial organizing. His Challenging White Supremacy workshops take anti-authoritarian process a step further into group therapy where everybody must raise their hands before speaking, police their language to make sure it's polite and couched in I-speak, and create safe spaces in meetings for women, gays, and people of color by prioritizing their voices. This oh-so-politically-correct process manages simultaneously to play on straight white male guilt and to reinforce the victim status of the oppressed.

But again, I'm getting ahead of myself.

Before I get into the heart of my critique of multicultural PC identity politics as exemplified by the idiocy of folks like Chris Crass, I need to discuss a not-so-tangential development. As Marxism was retreating from the streets and the workplaces during the 1970s and 80s, it was also in retreat on the campuses, gradually replaced by post-Marxist postmodernism with its insistence that there are no overarching political themes or central political meta-narratives, only an aggregate of fragmented identities, interests and narratives. In postmodernist thinking there is no whole, merely the disassociated parts of a non-existent totality. Against Marxists like yours truly who insist on identifying as working class and consider class politics absolutely central to any kind of theory or action, postmodernists argue that I'm being reductionist, that Marxism has never adequately explained racial or sexual differences, that such differences actually can't be encompassed by any single theory or system, and that these differences are what define politics today. Postmodernists would further argue that the entire working class is just an intellectual construct, entirely subjective, and essentially culturally determined. There are no class interests dividing society, and no class struggle based on those interests because interests are subjectively individual, culturally defined, or at most based on one's racial or sexual identity.

I'll kick down these arguments when I take on the leftover Left in a moment. And I won't dwell on the fascist origins and influences on postmodernism from the likes of Nietzsche, Heidegger, de Man, Schmitt, Gadamer, Bataille and Blanchot. I'll simply indicate the remarkable confluence between postmodernist anti-philosophy and the political approach of anti-authoritarianism described above. An extraordinary coincidence indeed. It's telling that postmodernists would rather believe in Jung's mystical synchronicity to explain such a riveting coincidence than, say, the possibility that capitalism might be a social system that expands, that totalizes, that remains the meta-narrative of our time.

Brass knuckles time.

Let's narrow the characteristics of the leftover Left to three, beginning with its uncritical inheritance of the list of issues mentioned above from the 60s and 70s Left. For the most part, the current positions taken on those issues are rehashed from better-written points of unity twenty to thirty years old by now. That is, when they're not "Oh, national liberation struggles? Cool! We support that." The second characteristic is the belief—either anti-authoritarian or postmodern—that there is no center to politics, no driving force, no totality, no absolute truth, no overarching theme or unity, no meta-narrative. The amalgam of struggles, identities and partial truths that emerged in the 1960s was just that. It's all that politics, or for that matter reality amounts to, and any attempt to foster a discussion that there might actually be some kind of totalizing agent like capitalism shaping both politics and reality is immediately suspect, if not automatically wrong. To quote the fascist Yeats "Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold." Finally comes process, the *sine qua non* of the leftover Left. There is an inordinate amount of attention paid to process, to raising one's hand, to speaking only when called upon, to following the stack, to not interrupting, in lieu of any discussion of ideas, of theory, of real substance. Drawn primarily from the anti-authoritarian milieu's rich experience with affinity group, spokescouncil, small group process and consensus decision-making, this process-oriented approach in the hands of the leftover Left is often infected with an admiration, if not an envy, of the accomplishments of some of the more unsavory elements on the Left, old and new, resulting in distortions of anti-authoritarian process.

To paraphrase an infamous 1970 pamphlet, *The Tyranny of Structurelessness*, what fundamentally characterizes the leftover Left is the tyranny of process, of process über älles. Because, let's face it, there's not a whole lot of actual substance to the leftover Left, no thriving theoretical or even didactic ideological debates. Indeed, it's the leftover Left's process that permits it to sidestep such debates altogether. Take that sacred cow consensus for example. Outside the context of a small, relatively homogeneous affinity group, consensus invariably has a dumbing down effect. Used in a broad organization of diverse individuals with diverse perspectives, consensus functions to emphasize action over

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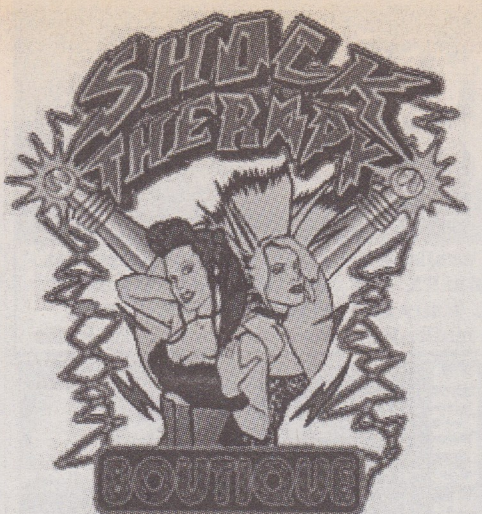

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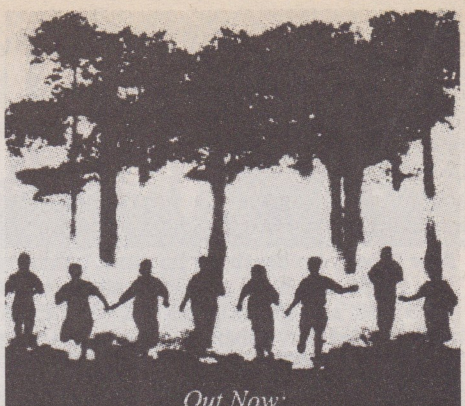

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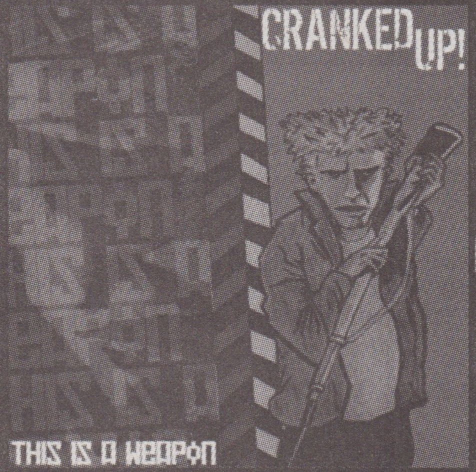

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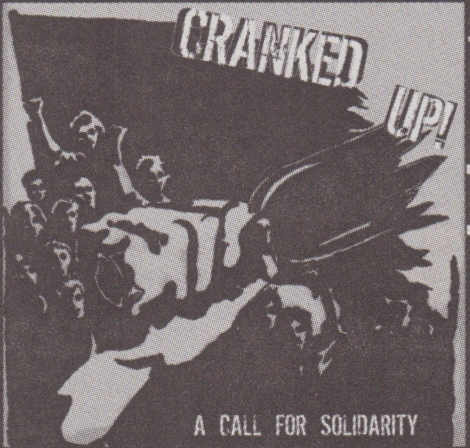

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ideas. It's far easier to get people who differ on just about everything to agree on what to do rather than on the reasons for doing something. Consensus facilities the sidestepping of analysis and critical thinking, promoting a profound anti-intellectualism that Featherstone, Henwood, and Parenti described so well in their essay "'Action Will Be Taken': Left Anti-intellectualism and Its Discontents":

So over all is the activist left just an inchoate, "post-ideological" mass of do-gooders, pragmatists and puppeteers? No. The young troublemakers of today do have an ideology and it is as deeply felt and intellectually totalizing as any of the great belief systems of yore. The cadres who populate those endless meetings, who bang the drum, who lead the "trainings" and paint the puppets, do indeed have a creed. They are Activismists.

That's right, Activismists. This brave new ideology combines the political illiteracy of hyper-mediated American culture with all the moral zeal of a nineteenth century temperance crusade. In this worldview, all roads lead to more activism and more activists. And the one who acts is righteous.

When consensus does manage to produce some common reason to take action, it's usually of the lowest-common-denominator "gosh that's so wrong" kind of moralistic analysis.

Needless to say, anti-authoritarians in particular and leftover Leftists in general do not recognize that their emphasis on process facilitates the avoidance of thinking about and collectively debating theory and analysis. Instead, they insist that means are identical with ends. In order to get to a democratic society radicals must practice democratic methods, nicely collapsing substance into process. This notion that means and ends are identical is a polar opposite reaction to the Leninist fallacy that the ends justify the means, and no less fallacious. Historically, things are much more complicated, with democratic methods producing tyrannical results (elected dictators) and authoritarian means producing democratic ends (social revolution). The ultimate consequence of this fallacy is that means come to substitute for ends, action takes the place of thinking, and doing radical things is sufficient to make one a revolutionary.

Most anti-authoritarians stop at equating conscious methods with conscious results. Leftover Leftists take it a step further by saying that unconscious behavior is identical to conscious means and ends. If a man in a meeting doesn't wait to be called on to speak, interrupts others, and doesn't honor the sanctity of the stack, he is accused of exercising the straight white male privilege inherent in his socially conditioned behavior, automatically making him guilty of straight white male supremacy by the equation of behavior with means and ends. Straight white men are made to feel guilty of conscious crimes because of their unconscious behavior, and the oppressed are simultaneously reaffirmed as victims, so crippled and disempowered by their oppression they require meetings to be entirely safe spaces where their voices are prioritized, everybody uses therapy I-speak and is extremely respectful, and following procedure becomes sacrosanct.

Again because there is no real content to all of this, by which I mean objective standards and criteria for determining oppression drawn from a coherent political analysis, the truth about what is or is not oppressive is assumed to reside solely in the word of the oppressed and their subjective feelings of oppression. Of course "white folks, straight people and men" need to check themselves, stand back and "shut the fuck up" at meetings run by leftover Left process. "And how do you insure democratic control of industry?" Marvin Garson once asked rhetorically in a 1968 essay "Going Beyond Democracy" to spell out a kind of ultra-leftism called Council Communism. "Why, by setting up workers' councils in each industry which operate with full respect for all the normal democratic procedures—especially the right to establish caucuses and factions, and the right to strike. The economy, in short, will be run the way a government is SUPPOSED to be run; it will be like a gigantic New Left convention—impeccably democratic and a stone drag." The leftover Left's ideal meeting is radical group therapy run amok, which makes Garson's boring New Left convention seem downright inviting.

Finally, for all the scurrilous attacks by leftover Leftists and their postmodernist cohorts on those who insist on talking about class—we're economic reductionists, identity politics have replaced class politics, social class is an intellectual construct—no similar attempt has been made to "deconstruct" capitalism. This is truly a case of the leftover Left not seeing the forest for the trees, of not comprehending the totalizing dimension of capital for the essentialist distractions of racial and sexual identity. The leftover Left, no less than postmodernism, is afflicted with holophobia—the fear of totality—according to Terry Eagleton. Not looking for totality becomes code for not looking for capitalism. Capitalism is by no means a homogeneous, fully accomplished total system. Fundamental to capitalism, however, is the need to grow, to expand, to encompass, to globalize, to totalize.

It is the expansionist aspect of capital that creates a negative totality in the working class based upon exploitation, expropriation, and alienation. Capitalism—not culture or intellectual fiat or subjective smoke-and-mirrors—creates the working class. Capital organizes the working class to appropriate surplus value. So long as capitalism remains a globalizing force, the working class will hold the potential for its own self-activated and self-organized totality. Identity politics—the awareness of a particular form of oppression by a particular racial or sexual group—considers that awareness, that identity, as a be-all and end-all, instead of as a point of departure. A wealthy bourgeois woman somehow magically shares an elemental female identity with the maid she employs at starvation wages. Identity ultimately becomes an essentialist prison, a politics of isolated, competing groups unable to transcend their immediate points of oppression to confront and overthrow the social system in which they are rooted.

Because the working class has the potential to transform a social order based on class and other forms of oppression, class politics is the terrain on which we can go beyond the fragmentation and limitations of identity politics. That means analyzing and overcoming racial and sexual oppression within a class framework, developing an encompassing class analysis of the structures of bourgeois social power which define and control the social conditions of specific and general oppression, and heightening the subjective class consciousness of working people's objective class position so that they can organize themselves as a class to become the active subject of history instead of its passive object.

I mean, come on. What really makes sense here? Organizing a bunch of competing racially and sexually identified groups into an ersatz majority to try and affect marginal change? Or actually organizing society's overwhelming majority—the working class—to make social revolution.

Next column I'll describe the tendency I identify with most—left communism or the ultraleft—and then tell you a little story about how the ultraleft and the leftover Left skirmished over the flying picket. Then, honest, I promise to get to dissecting socialism and Marxism.

ANTI-POSTMODERNIST BIBLIOGRAPHY: *Against Postmodernism: A Marxist Critique* by Alex Callinicos, *The Illusions of Postmodernism* by Terry Eagleton, *Postmodernism, or, The Logic of Late Capitalism* by Frederic Jameson, and *The Seduction of Unreason* by Richard Wolin.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I can be contacted at hooligan3@mindspring.com.

Walking Through an Urban Blizzard

It was 4 a.m. and snowing. Another blizzard had hit Boston, the snow flying diagonally in waves. I put on my black padded trench coat and stepped outside into the thick of it, alone in the quiet street outside of my apartment. I walked, smoking another damn cigarette, thinking of living in the moment. Enjoying this moment, the crunch of snow under my feet, leaving the only footprints. Everything was quiet, and I could hear the sound of the snow landing, a million crystals falling from the sky. The apartments and houses were all dark. A huge yellow snowplow rumbled on the other

end of the street, clearing a path. I had just finished another night of work preparing for the La Rivolta! anarcha-feminist festival (updating the website, sending emails to volunteers, and making calls) and had escaped the outside. The trees were beautiful, all white powder against dark wood, limbs stretched into the night sky lit up by the pink gray glow of a snow sky of the city.

In the middle of a snowstorm, I was thinking of life and solidarity and the meaning of footprints and where we are all headed in our own lives, and in the lives of each other. Life calls for gigantic courage and strength, said the outspoken Virginia Woolf in the 1920s. More than anything it calls for confidence in oneself. Confidence and trust in oneself is not an easy thing to achieve. We all—especially women and anyone outside the dominant culture—have been told over and over by this destructive capitalist society that our dreams, desires and very selves are not valid.

I breathed deep the cold air, shivered, and looked to the sky. I gathered myself inside my large trench coat and smiled at the night.

This has been the hardest winter for me in a long time. People come undone sometimes; this is inevitable and natural. Decomposition is a vital process in the cycle of life... (from the new *Recipes for Disaster*), and I have done that. I felt my head cave in and questioned everything. After all, it takes total annihilation to find out what is truly indestructible. And when I was undone, I looked hard at my life. I made a commitment to try to live true to myself. I want to travel, live in different places, videotape activists and bands, and do all kinds of things. By the time you read this, sometime in May, I will be in Europe, traveling with Behind Enemy Lines and videotaping the tour for a documentary to be released on my label, Propaganda Machine. As the catchy phrase on the back of *Recipes for Disaster* reads, "Plan for adventure, plan for pleasure, plan for pandemonium, as you wish; but plan, lay plans constantly." I've got lots of plans; some will work while others won't. We'll see! I've got to try at least, that is what keeps life interesting and vital.

I finished my cigarette and headed back to the warmth of my new place. My new room is sparse, just a bed and my desk, my plants, a couple of trunks where I keep my clothes, and a large comfortable chair that was here when I moved in. I like the openness, the feeling of possibility and simplicity.

Now, I settle in for another stretch at the computer to finish my column. La Fraction plays on the CD player, and I keep my boots on because it's cold, even inside. I could put blankets on my windows, like I have for the last twelve years I've lived in Boston, but I don't. I prefer the sunlight in the daytime, even if I have to wear a sweater.

I run my fingers through my hair, stretch and get back to my endless story of The Profit$ on European tour as I promised…

Passports and the Embassy

I was standing in a parking lot in the middle of Prague, wondering what to do. Everything I had with me was gone, and the only thing I had left were the clothes on my back.

Tour had come to a complete, terrible, and utter stop. We were fucked.

The van was robbed, and gone were three passports and my wallet. We were careless, and we didn't have our valuables on us at all times. Only a couple of hours had passed between looking at the beautiful views of the city, and finding our bags gone.

I went with Nina to call and cancel the bankcards in my wallet. Then, my worst moment of tour—calling my mom. Trying to find some privacy in the small apartment, I took the cordless phone into a storage closet and dialed countless digits to reach a small town in the southern US. The wait for someone to pick up the phone seemed endless. Yes, she was home!

"Hi mom. Yeah, good to hear you too. Yes, the flight was fine, and Prague is very nice. Um, things are not going so well," I said. "I just had my wallet and all of my money stolen, and everyone else in the band is broke too. I really hate to ask, but could I borrow some money? Could you send it by Western Union?" I felt like shit for asking, and it reminded me of being a little kid again.

"Sure, no problem. Are you OK?" she asked. With all the stress and being sick, I started crying. Then, a roommate opened the closet door and caught me standing there. A raging, angry anarcha-feminist crying on the phone to her mom. What a bad fucking day.

But I was very grateful that my mom could help out. I suppose that is what family is for, helping each other out when we need it most.

I got my shit back together and went back to the van. We decided to go to the show that night, and then come back to Prague to get replacement passports the next day. Driving to the show, everyone was in a terrible mood and wondering who was to blame, and if someone left the door unlocked. As true Bostonians, rather than get in a fight, we all resolved—without consultation—never to speak of it again. Shit happens. The silence was heavy and gray, and Hubert put on the Citizen Fish tape again for the hundredth time as we cruised on to Brno, Czech Republic.

We arrived at a small bar called Mydlo as the local band finished. The place was smoky as a dungeon, and looked like one too. The concert room looked ancient, with brick walls that curved upwards into low arches. Disease played a short but very fast and powerful set, and it was good to see their crew. They kept handing me glasses of beer and cheered me up with their energy. The Profit$ set went well, except for my voice was still hoarse and Adam was getting sick too. During our set a group of skinhead looking punks stood in front of the stage, and I couldn't tell what they thought of the band, or of me. They looked hostile with their arms crossed and serious faces. Then, after our last song, to my great surprise, they started smiling, and all wanted a picture taken! Goes to show you never know what people are thinking. So, somewhere in Czech Republic there is a photo of me and a group of tough punks who I thought looked pissed off, but who turned out to be very cool—cheers to them!

Back to Prague. We had two days off to get our passports in order. The next morning Rich, Adam, and I woke up early to get to the American Embassy. Fuck! The last place I wanted to be on tour, an outpost of the American empire! We found the building on a narrow street downtown, surrounded by tourist offices. Guards stopped all the cars on the street, and used mirrors on a long pole to check for any bombs strapped underneath. Getting in the building, I had to almost undress, taking off my spiked belts, boots, bracelets and necklaces to go through the metal detector. Marines with guns stood on guard.

Inside the office, in line to get our papers processed, we sat on a wooden bench for hours, drinking coffee from a machine Adam found in a nearby shop. I saw several people answering the questions of the women behind the glass, trying to get visas to the States. They were dressed in suits, having to prove their business worth and job prospects, and here I was, an American who lost her passport wearing torn clothes and blue hair. I felt really dirty. Here I was in their country on tour with a band, on holiday, and they were having a hard time getting into the US for a job. Another example of how borders serve only the interests of the state and business, and only harm and contain us in our personal lives.

A day later, we had our temporary passports in hand, and were on our way to Austria. At this point, it was Sloma driving, Hubert and Brian up front, Rich, Adam and I in the middle seat, and Lucho sitting in the back with the gear. We knew that crossing the border with someone not in a real seat could be trouble. But, Lucho said he would deal with whatever happened, and off we went. We thought maybe we'd be lucky.

The Austrian Border

We passed through an unmanned checkpoint in the road, and saw signs welcoming us to Austria. We all started cheering and saying how "awesome" it was. Then, a moment later, we saw the real border crossing and a line of cars waiting. Fuck. Sloma said, "This is not awesome," and we all had a sinking feeling.

The border guard did not like the fact that someone was in the back with the gear. He decided not to give us a fine, but someone had to get out. Fuck. Lucho got his stuff together, and we all started talking at once, trying to figure out what to do.

Hubert saw a car with Polish plates in line after us, and ran up to them. He came back a minute later, and said that the two Polish guys could give Lucho a ride through the border. We would meet at the first gas station exit. That was the plan.

Lucho grabbed his backpack and jumped out.

"Lucho! Are you going to be OK?" I asked, worried as hell. Only crazy homicidal maniacs give people rides in the US.

"I'll be fine, I'll meet you at the show."

He got in the small car with the two Polish guys, and off they went. I had this sick feeling I would never see him again. It seemed like the

beginning of a chapter in Steven King story.

A moment later, we were on the road, joking about Lucho being kidnapped, but it wasn't really funny, especially when we got to the first gas station and neither the car nor Lucho was there. Driving on the highway we stopped at the next five gas stations thinking maybe there was a miscommunication. Still, no Lucho in sight. No more jokes, just a bad, worried feeling.

In Vienna, we got lost on the way to EKH (which seemed to be a running theme of tour). Driving around, Hubert was asking folks in various languages where the local anarchist squat was. An interesting way to see the city. Fuck. Finally, hours later, we arrived outside this massive, famous squat and jumped out. And who was the first person we saw? Lucho!

"Those guys were really weird. They didn't want to stop and let me out," Lucho said. "They got to Vienna and stopped at a gas station, one guy got out, so I jumped out and got a taxi to the show," he explained. Even with being taken for a ride by the strange Polish guys and making an escape, he still made it to the show before us, and was already drinking a beer! Damn. We were all so glad to see him again, in one piece!

After we stopped hugging Lucho, we met Alfred, who set up the show, and Jon and Marta who had come from London for the weekend. It was so great to meet these English Active punks in person, as for several months we had talked on the phone and emailed, organizing The Profit$ record and tour. They had heard about the robbery, and had brought me a sweatshirt and lots of vegan snacks for the band. It really cheered us up. Not to mention, I was getting cold!

Jon immediately had good news for us—our CDs, T-shirts, and the Active stall had finally arrived! International post had screwed us over, and the boxes didn't arrive in Bremen the week before as promised. So, all the boxes had to catch up with us in Vienna a few days into our tour. It was amazing to see our CD, *The Profit$ '99-'05* for the first time after so many months and long hours working on it. It was beautiful! A printing company in the UK put together the all-paper box the CD was in, and printed three beautiful posters with our artwork, all in black and white. I was so happy to finally have it in my hands. The Active Distribution stall we were taking on tour was pretty massive by our tour standards, and it took some time to go through all the pamphlets and books.

The EKH squat itself was a large building that looked like it used to be an old library or maybe a factory. There was a large bar room on the first floor that looked straight out of a movie, with metal art, music playing, smoke (of course) and punks hanging out. Also on the first floor—next door—was a bookstore and info shop. Just my favorite kind of place, where you can get a good radical book, and then debate it over a good beer. The concert room was downstairs and had a small stage and a nice sound system. I was told that through the large double doors there was another huge room, as big as a theatre, where they sometimes had shows in the past. There was also a whole floor of the building dedicated to housing refugees. Another floor had a large communal kitchen where we were given a kick ass vegan dinner. Once again, we were all impressed and thankful for the hospitality that bands are shown on tour. The food was so good!

The show was a really good time. We played again with Disease, who rocked as usual. The couple of days off, along with the tea drinking, chewing garlic and eating honey by the spoonful really helped my voice, and I was back to screaming against the system with all my might. Hell fucking yeah! Thanks to Alfred and the whole EKH crew for such a good time!

Never Ending Story

This story of tour is now officially never ending. I don't know what to do, except maybe take some lessons on how to summarize. I haven't even gotten to the best shows, the van breaking down, or the ridiculous huge fight that broke out in Paris. Oh well. I do sleep, occasionally, and this column has to end for now. As I mentioned before, I'm going back to Europe in May, so please get in touch: ransom@theprofits.org. Also check out www.theprofits.org and www.larivolta.org. Thanks to everyone who has written over the last month, I really appreciate it. Also, a big cheers to the La Rivolta Collective. You'll be hearing about them next month!

In solidarity and blazing guitars, Erika

I had a great "fake records" column planned for the April issue. Then Golnar told me that was *last* month's issue. Like I'm fucking paying attention to months or even reading the fucking zine in the first place, Christ! I had a bunch of imaginary Solid Sex Lovie Doll singles all thought up, along with the token fictitious band break-ups and false super groups. I was sure you'd all shit your pants, but now it's wasted. Thankfully, the real stuff is strong enough this time around to not make it a total waste. Trust me though: had I actually had it together in time, you would've saved a lot of dough.

I'm normally pretty on top off the genres I obsess over, but I was surprised on more than one occasion this month. The biggest surprise was delivered by a bunch of familiar faces that I didn't expect much from. To be honest, I had no intention of forking over the dough for THE A-LINES. Sure, yadda ex-HEADCOATEES yadda. I've fallen prey to that before with Kyra and Holly's spotty-is-just-a-nice-way-of-saying-yuck solo work. I had given up. Then a chance spin over here at MRR HQ prompted me to head straight to the store and pick the fucker up. Needless to say, I've been spinning it multiple times daily. *You Can Touch*, released by Sympathy For The Record Industry, is full of raw, catchy *punk* songs. The A-Lines have a far punker sound than anything heard out of these girls previously, and they're better than anything I've heard outta BILLY CHILDISH (who produces here) in ages. They somehow manage to take everything that worked about their previous work and tip it over into full-on punk. The moments of cuteness are few and far between, but noteworthy in that they actually fucking work to great effect when used sparingly (as opposed to Thee Headcoatees' drown-'em-in-giggles tactics). Then again, cute will always take a backseat to an ELECTRIC EELS cover. Do yourself a favor and investigate The A-Lines. There's a teaser 45 to coincide with this album's release if, for some strange reason, I haven't already sold you on it.

From low expectations to incredibly high ones, BBQ's *Tie Your Noose* delivered ten-fold. I would place Mark Sultan (of SPACESHITS and LES SEXAREENOS fame) near the top of my favorite songwriters/performers list. Put simply, the guy knows what the fucking he is doing. BBQ specializes in pure, real rock 'n' roll, flawlessly executed and genuinely fun. *Tie Your Noose*, from the Bomp label, is his strongest showing to date, packed with tunes are so good they'll induce spit-takes and cries of "I must've heard this classic song before… somewhere… " all across the land. For many (myself included), one-man-bands have a way of becoming a bit tiresome. Lucky for us, tunes this great never get old.

The front-runner for The Hip-Shaker of 2005 has to be *Love Always Wins*, the new album from THE FEVERS! This band has been a longtime favorite of mine (and my better half) since their *excellent* debut single and they get better with every release. Operating on some weird plane in between power-pop and garagey R&B, The Fevers pull it off with every tune. Listen to "Dance" and try to remain still. It just won't happen.

In The Red checks in again this month with a couple more daring, essential releases. The first is the debut LP by LAMPS, a new band from Los Angeles. Fans of the label's early years should definitely check these guys out, as I was immediately reminded of the tortured early 90s bash-filled garage crop. The songs are simplistic, but drenched in the mean-spirited attitude and bash'n'screech we've all come to know and love/fear. That said, Lamps still sound fresh and adventurous enough to stand right along side the label's noteworthy current bands. Any way you cut it, these brutes are not to be tangled with.

If tangling is your game, you could get really fucking kinky with VOLT, the French electro-punk outfit featuring your favorite leather-clad chanteuse, LILI Z. In The Red has just released the band's second 12" EP, *Sex Five Nun*, and it's unlike anything else you are likely to spin this year. I would have never in a million years thought I'd hear an electronic SOLGER cover and enjoy it, but hey… never say never. Although *Sex Five Nun* is this month's "Adventurous Listeners Only" pick, I'd still whole-heartedly recommend it to fans of THE NORMAL, METAL URBAIN

and Lili's recent solo work (which should include more than a few of you). Of course, you could always spin this week's top electroclash pick whilst engaging in ritualistic masturbation. No skin off my electrodes.

Since I've already dug my electro-punk hole, I might as well plug you into the latest effort from NAZIS FROM MARS. While some folks might scoff at my gratuitous ramblings on synthy stuff, there's no mistaking Nazis From Mars as anything other than a punk band. This is the same three chord snootiness you've always loved… ran through a futuristic filter. On *Space Pebbles*, the sounds of the future collide with the garage of the past, as The Nazis find themselves covering some of your favorite *Nuggets*. My reaction to this band remains lukewarm, but die-hard fans (apparently many?) are sure to find it loads of fun. Check out the always elusive Ken Rock Records for a copy.

Ken Rock has also unleashed SIR HENRY FIAT'S BASTARD, the new "solo" outing from Sweden's masked madman. Don't expect an acoustic, introspective Henry now that he is (for the moment) Sore-less. Tunes like "Your Mom Is a Fucking Mongo" and "Senorita, I'm In Spain" carry over all the blown-out fury of his previous work. I heard his last album was pretty good too.

I've heard an awful lotta chatter about THE SHOP FRONTS recently. Thankfully, we get to see what all the fuss is about this month with the band's debut outing, a split 7" EP with DC SNIPERS on Your Permanent Records. Featuring ex-members of F-HOLE, ZODIAC KILLERS and the man behind all those DOT DASH shows that keep NYC abuzz, The Shop Fronts certainly are an impressive new band. Relatively straight-forward and packed with crunch and energy, their songs wouldn't sound out of place on any of the obscuro-punk 70s/80s punk comps that permeate our record collections. DC SNIPERS aren't slouches either, offering up a further-out take on the same theme. The tunes have the same driving quality, but the lo-fi chaos and *big* buzz make it a winner. This single is already going for high prices on eBay. Of course, I'm sure you could just mailorder one from the band too…

Criminal IQ Records was gracious enough to release *In The Winkel*, the new LP by THE KRUNCHIES. Upon first listen, I must admit that I was taken aback by the sheer speed and snot of these tunes. This shit rules! Male/female screams over incredibly hooky speedsters that blur the line between poppy punk and all-out hardcore. It's over in a flash, but the ride is wild while it lasts. Investigate immediately!

Trickknee Productions knows how to pick 'em. Hot on the heels of ALUMINUM KNOT EYE comes HUE BLANC'S JOYLESS ONES, a new band featuring members of notables like THE KNOCKERS, BLUE BALLS and THE STRONG COME ONS. The *Notoriety* 7" EP is a genuine breath of fresh air, offering the strongest actual garage punk showing I've heard in ages. Again, we revisit the early 90s school of garage: four goons from dullsville pounding out racket strong enough to be mentioned in the same breath as many greats of yore. Far and away, the 7" pick of the issue.

SHOOT IT UP is the latest group of drug addicts that have found a home on Proud To Be Idiot Records. Keeping in the fine tradition of THE GRABBIES and STREET TRASH, Shoot It Up's *Train Tracks* 7" EP is a dangerous, no-frills whirlwind of a record, further blurring the line between hardcore punk and the sort of weirdo tomfoolery commonly associated with this column. Get it or Anus will tell you to go fuck yourself. Actually, he'll probably tell you that anyway.

I'm going to officially admit that CAREER SUICIDE is one of my favorite current bands. There. I've shed my garage and art-punk tags. Praise the lord and start sending me hardcore records. Anyway, *Signals* is the band's new 7" EP, released in North America by Slasher Records and in Europe (as a picture disc!) by Even Worse and Way Back When. You'd be wise to hunt this fucker down pronto, if it isn't already gone. Next month, I should have a copy of their new 12" on Feral Ward to dish!

The crop of bootlegs and reissues this time around is packed with *essential* purchases. First and foremost, one of the very best punk singles of all time, the *Rattenloch* 7" EP by DIRTSHIT, has been re-released by an incredibly generous and knowledgeable servant of the punk public. This is quite simply one of the most vicious *Killed By Death* singles in existence and the reissue is certain to vanish quickly. Act fast… or risk being publicly outed as a flake!

For the hardcore hounds among us, SS DECONTROL's first two LPs, *The Kids Will Have Their Say* and *Get It Away*, get the repro-bootleg treatment. These are two of the best and most highly sought-after LPs of the era, so you know need 'em. I drink daily and I bought them anyway. That's just how I roll.

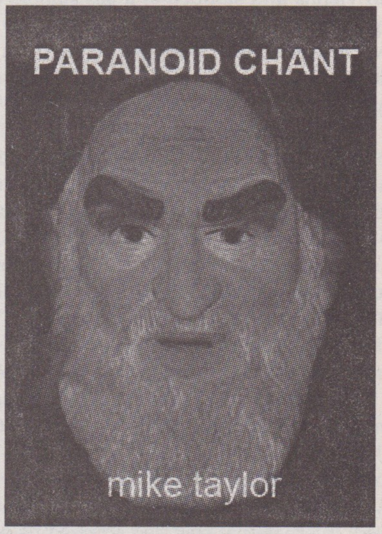
Power pop and new wave fans have reason to rejoice with a repro-boot of *Perfect Youth*, the much-loved LP by POINTED STICKS. You could essentially view this LP as a blueprint for much of what is coming out labels like Dirtnap today. Pop fans could scour eBay and pay out the ass, or grab this, the next best thing. Your choice… just get it!

It was nice to stumble upon the new WIPERS bootleg, *Complete Rarities '78-'90*, but it's not without its downfalls. Sure, the classic early material is here… but some less than stellar moments rear their heads. It's pretty much a 50/50 split between greatness and not-so-great, but I'm still glad I picked it up. That's how fucking sick I am.

Although the above-mentioned records showcase some pretty heavy hitters, one obscure re-release takes the cake this month. Phonomenal Records first dazzled me with their HEADBANGERS 7" EP release, offering up some certifiably *killer* unknown German punk from the *Killed By Death* era. Well, they've outdone themselves with *OH87*, a double LP chronicling OFFENSIVE HERBST 87! "Who?" Precisely! Contemporaries of bands we've come to know and love, OH 87 appeared on a few compilations and released material in the early 80s on Heimat Records. For me, *OH87* amounts to nothing less than buried treasure. The material on this release is fucking fantastic, pure and simple. OH 87 crank out some raw punk and DIY that stands up to the other German greats, adding artful tinges that make it all the more appealing. This mammoth 2xLP compiles all the band's legit releases, a slew of demos and some excellent sounding live material. Naturally, it's packaged with tons of photos, old flyers and band info (in German… help!). If you can locate a copy and cope with the import price tag, do not pass on it. This is a must for fans of *Bloodstains Across…* and the *Hyped2Death/Messthetics* series. Wow!

With that asslicking, I'll leave you to the hunt. Next month will bring us rundowns of THE FEELERS, BLACK LIPS, CATHOLIC BOYS and many more. Until then… !!!

MITCH CARDWELL, PO BOX 23882, OAKLAND, CA 95623, USA letsgethurt@yahoo.com



Providence, Rhode Island, like many third-rate post-industrial burgs, is stepping into the twenty-first century Giuliani style in 2005. Merchants in the city's beleaguered downtown have allocated funds to start a Business Improvement District, which has commissioned Louisville, Kentucky's Block By Block to provide security/safety guards to patrol downtown from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Providence has provided for eight of what they're officially calling "Ambassadors." Their job is coping with panhandling, drug dealing, public intoxication, and illegal peddlers. Stuff like that. You know, homeless people. These Ambassadors will be unarmed and have no police power. Mostly, city officials say, they will have skills in CPR, First Aid, self-defense, and I swear this is true, "Give people advice on a good place to grab a bite to eat." I swear to fucking bejeesus. The City has allocated $800,000 annually to have these people, eight of them, loitering downtown to *advise people on where to get a good bite to eat.* I will do that for free right now. There's a new fake Mexican restaurant, which will remain nameless, which delivers beer and margaritas; no ID, no problem. In pilgrim-ass New England. Support that shit while you can, Rhode Islanders. But back to griping.

Block By Block is a division of Brantley Services, a corporation that provides staff and security for events. It currently provides security staff to Business Improvement Districts in Louisville, Cincinnati, Nashville, Columbus, Ohio, Columbia, South Carolina, Des Moines, Newark, and Pasadena.

From a law enforcement point of view, who are these people the merchants (85% support!) are about to roll onto the city streets? Weren't the police just on strike last year for better wages? Isn't the fire department *still* on strike and without a city contract? While one of the downtown property moguls has been a vocal proponent for hiring from a pool of retired or underemployed rookie cops (currently, many police officers are retiring as early as 41 and taking work at universities and the like, presumably due to shit wages and stress), as of now they're going to be plain old, privately employed security guards.

From a troublemaking perspective, why are these people not armed? And as they are the only physical representatives of the capitalist reoccupation of post-white flight urban centers, doesn't it make sense to take advantage of their ill-preparedness and generally ill-stated job position? Shouldn't someone be organizing informal, jaunty outings to assault these Ambassadors? I mean really, if everyone who took this job got their ass righteously served back to them, how long would it remain a viable employment option? I can only assume the wages aren't the best, you have to wear a stupid parka emblazoned with a ridiculous yellow and black "Safe Team" logo, and again, you're not armed. How many times would *you* get beaten up for that job, dear reader? Think about it, because Providence's Business Improvement District has a Sunset Clause of three years. One of Giuliani's first actions as mayor was to make Times Square a BID, putting all those future-primitive janitor/thugs all over the place in busted looking onesies. Three years isn't really so much fisticuffs, in the grand scheme.

It's not just these new downtown security guards, of course, although a roving gang of uniformed police lackeys in any other neighborhood would raise more than a few eyebrows. It's the fact that this assignment comes on the heals of the forced relocation across the interstate of the formerly downtown homeless shelter, massive redevelopment, and February 24th's unveiling of a new 32-story, 90 million dollar high-rise luxury condominium to bolster the Providence skyline. In the name of increasing the tax base and purportedly attending to the housing crisis, any development seems to be good development in this city, whose serious inferiority complex has led to courting Boston's ugliest and richest-looking to get out of that city and ruin another. Admittedly, I don't know enough about all the constituents of a city's tax base to respectably address that, but I do know that the very real housing crisis in Providence is a crisis among the poor and working class who already live in the city, *not* the super-rich the Chamber of Commerce is hoping to populate downtown in the future.

Now I don't know if my political devotions could be labeled *anarchist;* I realize that to live in a capitalist society demands an endless succession of compromises and accommodations. But it is hardly radical to wish that your elected officials, despite what bogus theater *elections* may or may not be (I'm being kind to the crimethinkers; local elections are one fine way, albeit not the only way, to express your political preferences), bone up on some basic economic theory. It would be radical, yes, to wish for a *compassionate* electorate which builds public policy around its constituents' needs. In this column, however, I won't even suggest such a thing. My thesis in the now is simply thus: private execution of heretofore public services is a negative trend. Whether it be the outsourcing of school and prison lunch programs or private policing of urban areas, the attendant flipside of public subsidy/private profit is a display of bad faith in the social contract. When punxes are cynical, it's funny; when local governments are cynical, it's terrifying.

As always, thanks to Arwen for lugging me around on my recent trip to Oakland and SF. Extra thanks to Ivy. Write if you want: Mike Taylor, PO Box 28226,Providence RI 02908

When the dark gloom and fog takes over and I get depressed, or as I usually say, "my brain stops working right," I tend to get hard on myself. No matter how productive I am, I feel like a loser. No matter what I accomplish, I feel like a failure. No matter how much I get done, I feel no satisfaction from the work done. As winter has lingered on and my husband has been away on tour, I've been spending more and more time hibernating alone in my house. I often say that I haven't left the house all month, and though I do go to work every day, and take care of the basic necessities out in the world. What I mean is that I have not gone out socially, and I leave the house only when absolutely necessary. I am a bit of a loner and I usually enjoy the privacy and solitude, but when the mental fog comes, so does the social anxiety. And then when I want nothing more than to hang out with someone, I feel more alone than ever as I pull myself inward. A fear grows and develops that further cuts me off and isolates me from people. I become hypersensitive, and the littlest things can make or break my mood or my day. Consequently, it seems easier just sticking to myself, rather than taking the chance of finding out what can happen out there beyond my porch.

Usually, once I do leave the house, I feel better. Whether it's just getting dressed and out and about doing my solitary errands, or actually going to an event, meeting or function. While sometimes it does take some time to adapt and shake the cobwebs from my brain, usually, and I must emphasize usually, once there I feel so much better and am glad for having ventured out. Being out and about usually brings on the energy that I am craving while holed up in my hibernation. I'm a busy-body, and the less active I am, the lazier I get; the lazier I get, the more depressed I get; the more depressed I get, the worse food I eat; the more junk I eat, the more I feel fat; the more I feel fat, the more depressed I get, and the vicious cycles perpetuate themself. And it's frustrating because usually I know what I need to do to break them, and yet that is what is so hard sometimes—actually doing so. When all I need is a friend to lure me out of the house, all the phone calls I make go unanswered. When I think that being out and about randomly around strangers will help, I turn into a freak and I think everything and everyone is stupid. Of course these are the worse case scenarios, the events that I fear. And it is those fears which in turn make it hard to do what needs done. The fear of being in a conversation where you can't really say that flat out you feel like a depressed psychopathic weirdo, or the fear that when you talk to someone they will somehow unintentionally push that button which triggers the panic. Sometimes it's easier to just stay in my pajamas and cuddle with my dog.

The times when I get the most tweaked out about things usually comes when I'm already feeling depressed and start to access some sort of popular culture. Then I really get struck with the stupidity of everything, and I feel the utter frustration and pointlessness of living in this world. Watching the news can do this in a harsh manner. In turn I get really angry in a way that is part of the vicious cycle. The time when I notice it the most is when I'm going about my business and I start to think that everyone and everything is stupid, which is not how I ever look at the world. I'm the kind of optimistic positive person that is full of compassion, understanding and empathy for people all the time. So when I turn on myself and everyone else and think everything is "stupid," I know my brain is on the fritz. When I drive down the road and see people out on a Saturday night, going to bars, or out for dinner and they seem "stupid," I now know that I'm actually just jealous. I'm jealous of them for being able to be out and about, while I'm feeling like a total freak. Likewise, when I look in magazines and see things that hit me close to the heart and I think it's all "stupid," I realize that I'm really just mad at myself for not having accomplished my own goals, or completed my own tasks and projects, even if they have nothing to do with what I saw in that magazine. When I start to criticize someone else's accomplishments, it's only because I'm being reminded of my own failures. Of course most of this never comes out of my mouth, it all just stays in my head. And I have come to understand these moods when the hit me, and try to work through them, fight them or ride them out. But that doesn't always ease the pain and frustration at the time.

When it starts to hit close to home with my

own moral ethics and values, then I really get thrown for a spin. For example, I flip through another punk magazine and see loads of ads from big labels that I'm not that familiar with, who are punk but not so punk, and it's so obvious to me that it's all about business. Punk has become a business for so many people these days. There are distributors, labels, clubs, booking agents, and PR firms who are operating businesses. They are trying to promote themselves, their bands, their releases, and their interests. It's business, and it's about money. It can be gross. I turn on the TV and watch a few videos on the *Headbangers Ball* and it's gross—all these pre-fab hardcore bands that have nothing to do with punk, and metal bands that all sound the same, and they all sound like hardcore bands that once upon a time were good and meant something. Three generations later, in as many years, and the clones are manufacturing more clones, It's all about business, and success, and trends, and who's buying. It's about money. It's gross. Then I go into an independent bookstore and look at the hip photo art books and I'll see some kind of fashion shoot of punks, which makes me think of a fashion spread in some popular magazine where a guy was wearing a hat with a "Distraught" patch sewn on—it's thrown in my face how fucking absurd the world is and how it's sometimes just not fit to be in.

Sometimes I can admit that there is a part of me that is jealous of other people succeeding at something that I feel I should be able to do, like publishing a photo book, or simply getting the ad support for the zine. And yet the reason why I have not done so many things I'd like to do is I'm a perfectionist and am not motivated by trends, success and money. Clearly I am a terrible business person by choice. I don't want to be a businessperson, and when things that I believe in are turned into commodities, it's frustrating and I do not want to be a part of it. When I was photographing squatters in NYC in 1991, I remember a teacher telling me that I had a great story, and I should call *LIFE* magazine and present them with my pitch. I was flattered of course. What 20-year-old photo student who wants to be a documentary photographer wouldn't have been? But it didn't feel right, I wasn't trying to sell my story. It felt like I would be pimping myself, or more importantly, selling the squatters out. I couldn't do it. I didn't do it.

Eight years later I'm in an art gallery in SoHo and there are these huge prints of squatters displayed on the wall. I felt like I'd been violated. Sure, a part of me was jealous, 'cause I thought, "that could have been me eight years ago, or even now." But I also knew that I would never do it. Just in the same way that I would never have written an article for *Details* magazine about zines being the next cool in thing (again back in the early 90s) 'cause how the hell do you pimp your passion to the masses like that? It's so much easier for someone who doesn't care about the world they are grabbing from and promoting and pitching, because at the end of the fad they will move on to the next trend, leaving the last behind.

So what is one to do when they are stubborn and refuse to let go of those ideals? When they care so much that they can't even figure out how to walk hand-in-hand with the world? When the fog and cobwebs linger in the brain and claw and leave scars, while always pushing you to do more? When more is never enough, and no matter what gets done you know you can do better? What are you to do when you are your own worst critic? The workaholism and the perfectism fuel the depression when the darkness comes. It beats me up and beats me down. Something very simple will ultimately pull me out of it.

Once I am feeling well again, and my optimistic, positive self returns and my confidence is restored, then all the stupidity of the world will roll right off me. The dime-a-dozen metal hardcore clones will not affect me because they have nothing whatsoever to do with my life. The endless ads and one-sheets from PR firms won't faze me 'cause I will be able to see right through them, and know who's full of shit and who is sincere and down to earth. The trendy art books will either inspire me to get my own done, or they will remind me to do it the way I think it would be just. When I'm feeling better, I probably won't be looking at the ads or watching TV in the first place 'cause I'll be doing something much better with my time. And when I see, read or hear someone talk about something they are doing, I will be inspired and supportive of them, rather than belittling and berating myself. I will rise up on my own, rather than comparing myself in what only I could only see as my failure.

Yeah, when my brain starts working again, all the vicious cycles seem so silly. In fact all the emotional turmoil seems so unnecessary. But I know it will come again, and then I must try to use what I have learned to break out of the shell quicker. What I have learned is that November and March are the hardest months because they are the transitional months, and I hate the transition. As soon as the sun comes back out and spring holds on to stay, my eternal optimism and faith in the world will return. So I curl back into the couch, cuddle up with the dogs, a warm cup of coffee and a stack of books, and I wait.

Chris(tine) • c/o Slug & Lettuce • PO Box 26632 • Richmond VA 23261-6632

"I'll eat anything," says this drunk chick to me at a "secret" after hours party here in Phoenix.

"Don't even start," I tell her, as I slowly sip my Jose Cuervo.

"I will," she tells me, "I'm like G.G. Allin."

"G.G. Allin?" I ask, "Let me tell you a little story pre G.G...."

*

"I'll eat anything," says Jimmy Barf, many years back, with his spiky black hair and Hugh Hefner tuxedo jacket, as he and his brother, Mean Mike, down a six pack of Black Label in no time at all. They are both seated on an ugly fuzzy green couch in the living room of my ex-drummer, Frank.

"He will," explains Mean Mike, with his receding hairline and "Fish Tough or Die" tattoo on his right forearm. They make a good pair, Jimmy and Mike. The Rat Cafeteria Brothers. Besides looking and sounding like brothers, their actions are almost identical. They both open beer cans the same way, and belch in unison. Punk rock.

"I'll eat anything," Jimmy repeats. He's been saying it all night.

"I have something you can eat," says my Frank. We all look at him, and know what he means. Frank's a strange one. He's tall, lanky, has straight black hair like Johnny Thunders, and must weigh about four pounds.

"I'm not that way," belches Jimmy.

"He's not like that," repeats Mike.

"I'm just kidding, guys," says Frank, but we all know he isn't. Frank kinda liked the Barf brothers. He also kinda liked everything else that had any type of reproductive organ. So did his wife, Carrie. Frank was so thin that when he turned sideways, he was invisible, and Carrie's shadow weighed more than her husband.

"Are you guys going to join us in the back room later?" asked Frank, as he pointed to the door in the house that was always locked.

"No way," said Mike.

"Nope," said Jimmy.

"What's in the back room?" I asked, like an idiot.

Frank just laughed. As did Jimmy and Mike. It wasn't until about a year later that I found out what was in the back room. Or, rather, what went on in the back room. I was there for a party, a "Casa de Muerte" party. That means something like "House of Death" in Spanish. Anyway, I was drunk, and stumbling around, and being snoopy. They'd run out of beer, and I was bored. The girl I was after was ignoring me and talking to my friends Aaron and Jorge. So I decided I'd try and pry open the back room door that was always locked. I went and turned the knob, figuring it wouldn't open, but it did. Just a little. I peeked in and saw a bunch of candles burning. I looked on the floor and saw it moving. Squirming. At first I thought I was looking at a million worms, and in my drunken state, figured Jimmy and Mike had brought them to the house so they could fish or something. They were really into that. Fishing. They always had fishing rods with them, and every time I was in a car with them, and we drove over a bridge or something, and they thought that there was even the remotest possibility of catching something, they'd pull over, hop out, and they'd drop their lines into the water. Punk rock fishing nuts. Fish Tough or Die.

So, I'm looking at the floor move, and I begin to realize that I'm not looking at worms but

human bodies—all lubed up and squirming all over each other. I looked closer and saw erect penises, and boobs, and faces I recognized. It was then that I realized I was watching an orgy.

I quickly closed the door and ran away. Screaming. My friend Jorge stopped me and asked me what was wrong. I tried explaining to him that Frank and Carrie and lots of people we knew were all fucking each other in the back room that was always locked, that they were having a Roman orgy.

"Duh," said Jorge, "when did you figure that out?"

Aaron came walking up to us, and heard the conversation. I told him what I saw, and his reaction was much like Jorge's. They both seemed to know about these "Casa de Muerte" orgies for a long time. I asked them where the girl they were just talking to was. Her name was Nancy. Aaron told me that she just went to the back room, presumably to fuck. I wasn't after her anymore.

"I'll eat anything," repeated Jimmy for the umpteenth time. At this point, we were all getting tired of hearing him say that. Especially his brother, Mike, who had moved away from him and was now busy cutting loud farts in the La-Z-Boy chair in the left hand corner of the living room.

"Anything?" I asked Jimmy, just to make conversation with him so I wouldn't have to hear him say "I'll eat anything" again.

"Anything," he said. "I'll eat anything." And with that, he took a swig from a bottle of Jack Daniels that he was working on, since he and Mike finished off the case of Black Label.

I watched Jimmy down more booze, and listened to him blab about his eating anything, and began to get bored.

Suddenly I saw something move from the corner of my eye, and looked toward the kitchen. Nothing. Nothing moved. I looked back at Jimmy, and then again saw something move in the corner of my eye.

I looked again toward the kitchen. Nothing. But then it moved. It was a giant cockroach. A waterbug. What ever the fuck they are called. Big mean nasty bug. It was moving slowly on the kitchen floor.

"I'll eat anything," moaned Jimmy, as he leaned back into the fuzzy green couch, eyes half closed, now in a drunken stupor. I looked over to Mike. He just shrugged his shoulder, then farted a loud one.

"Jimmy," I said to him, "there is a roach on the kitchen floor. Why don't you eat that?"

"A roach? I'll eat that. I'll eat anything," he said.

"Go for it, then," I said.

"For a quarter. For a quarter, I'll eat anything," explained Jimmy, with his eyes closed.

I dug around in my front pocket, and found a quarter. I gave it to Jimmy Barf. "Eat it," I said. I really didn't expect him too. I expected him to give me my quarter back and puss out. He seemed like a big talker to me. He wasn't.

Jimmy got up off the couch and stumbled over to the kitchen. There he watched the roach for a few seconds, obviously studying its intricate movement patterns, and then he snatched it up in his hand. It was amazing.

"I'll eat anything," said Jimmy, and with that, he put the roach in his mouth, and closed it.

"Holy shit," I gasped, as I watched Jimmy just stand there with his mouth closed.

"Eat it," said Mike, now paying attention to his little brother's antics.

Jimmy smiled at us both and then opened his mouth. I stared in shock as the roach crawled around on his tongue, and then went for his upper lip and his nose.

"Nope," said Jimmy, and forced the insect back in his mouth with his forefinger.

"Eat it!" screamed Mike, now pissed at his brother for being such a tease.

Jimmy opened his mouth again, then closed it hard. He then reopened it and on his tongue, which he stuck out at me, was half the roach. The front half. He then bit down again and again and chewed up the roach. He again opened his mouth and I saw roach parts all over his tongue, gums and teeth. I almost puked.

"He'll eat anything," said Mike. And I shook my head in agreement. Jimmy then asked for the Jack Daniels to wash down the rest of the roach. Mike handed it to him. Jimmy took a swig, swallowed, then licked his lips.

"I'll eat anything," said Jimmy Barf, and with that he cut a loud fart.

"Mmmm," said Mean Mike, "Roach fart."

About a week later Mean Mike, myself, Jimmy Barf, my step dad, Nick, my ex-singer from Roach Motel, Bob, and his girlfriend, Cindy, and our friends Tom, Dorsey (now in the amazing Pink Lincolns), and Larry are all at a restaurant called Skeeters. Skeeters is one of those southern breakfast house chains. Only Skeeters is different. Skeeters is the home of the "Big Biscuit". By big, they mean big. I mean huge. Fucking gigantic. Their biscuits weigh over a pound each and go real well with beer. Especially at about three in the morning, which was the time we were all there. We had been at a punk rock show earlier and now were all wasted and needed to eat before we puked. Well, actually, we needed to eat so we could puke. Something other than shitty beer.

We all sat down at one large table and a waitress came over and gave us menus. She looked at all of us and made a funny face. I guess she wasn't used to mohawks, leather jackets, studs and spikes, bad breath, and fishing tattoos. Oh well.

Nick and I studied the menu and were surprised to find that Skeeters was now serving Chinese food. Chinese food at a southern breakfast house. Made sense to me. So I got up and walked over to the Chinese food "all you can eat" buffet bar. I saw egg-rolls, fried rice, sweet and sour pork, and lots of other stuff. I was amazed.

When the waitress got back to the table, I asked her when they started serving Chinese food. She told me that the owner, Bubba, thought it would spice things up. So I told her I'd try it. Big mistake.

"I'll eat anything," said Jimmy as he waited for his big biscuit to arrive along with the home fries, eggs, and hamburger he had just ordered.

"He will," explained his brother, Mike.

I explained to Nick that what Jimmy was saying was, in fact, true. That he had eaten a large waterbug a week earlier, and that he was nuts.

"I'll eat anything," repeated Jimmy as he took a swig from the bottle of Jim Beam he was hiding in the inner pocket of his tuxedo jacket.

"Anything?" asked Nick.

I whispered to Nick to please not get him started, that I was feeling nauseous already, and Jimmy was very likely to get us kicked out of the restaurant.

"I'll eat anything," said Jimmy to Nick.

"Really, Jimmy?" said Nick as I shook my head no. "You are saying that you will eat anything. Even Skeeter's Chinese food?"

I inform Nick that is what I ordered. He gives me that father-to-son pity look. I felt two feet tall.

"Yeah," says Jimmy, "for a quarter."

Nick digs around in his pocket and gives Jimmy a dollar.

"That's four quarters," exclaims Jimmy.

"That's right," explains Nick.

"I'll eat anything," he repeats.

We all sit around talking about what Jimmy has eaten in the past, and Larry informs us that he once saw Jimmy eat some road kill—that he killed himself. We all kinda make funny faces, and I feel my stomach start to turn.

Finally, the food arrives. Nick gets a large, I mean huge, over a foot in diameter, chocolate chip pancake. Bob and Cindy get big biscuits and eggs and stuff. Larry gets two burgers on big biscuits, and Mike gets the same as his brother. Everyone starts to eat, and the topic of Jimmy eating anything stops. I start to feel better.

Toward the end of the meal it starts again, after Jimmy takes a swig from his bottle of Jim Beam.

"I'll eat anything," he says.

"Okay", says Nick, and takes one of my sweet and sour balls on my plate, and gives it to Jimmy. Jimmy eats it. The things taste horrible. I'm amazed.

"Yummy," says Jimmy, licking his lips.

"If we put anything on your plate, you are saying you'll eat it?" Nick asks.

Jimmy nods his head. "I'll eat anything."

Nick pours some ketchup onto Jimmy's plate, over what's left of Jimmy's eggs and big biscuit. Then I scoop of some of my left-over Chinese food onto Jimmy's plate. Now there is ketchup, eggs, biscuits, and Chinese food.

"Yum," says Jimmy. "More."

Bob and Cindy lean over and pour the rest of their food onto Jimmy's plate as well. Then Larry walks over and spits on top of everything. That gets everybody spitting. We all pass the plate around and gob up as much as we can. Then Nick takes the full ashtray on the table and pours it onto the mound of used food, spit, and ketchup. Then Tom gets the idea to blow his nose in the food, and that starts the plate around again. Soon everyone is holding one nostril shut and blowing what ever they can onto the plate. It

is getting higher and higher by the second.

Jimmy watches all this with no concern on his face.

"Well?" says Nick to Jimmy, "You're not really gonna eat that, are you?"

I look around the restaurant and see some of the waitresses as well as patrons staring at our table. I hope Jimmy doesn't eat it. I don't wanna puke in front of everyone.

"I'll eat anything," repeats Jimmy for the zillionth time, "But I have to have something to wash it down with."

Bob and Cindy take a bottle of corn syrup off another table and hand it to Jimmy. It's full.

"Well," explains Jimmy, "here it goes."

And with that he took a fork and started to eat the pile of mucus, spit, cigarette butts, ashes, ketchup, and used food on his plate. He shovels in mouthful after mouthful. Nick and I watch in amazement. Everyone else, it seems, has seen this before. Finally, Jimmy finishes everything on his plate, and then, right in front of our eyes, downs the entire bottle of corn syrup. I feel my food make a rush to my throat. I swallow.

"I'll eat anything," explains Jimmy Barf to me and Nick. We shake our heads, and Nick is totally amazed. He tells Jimmy he wished he had taken his camera with him tonight, that no one will ever believe it.

"I'll eat anything," says Jimmy in response to Nick.

Nick tells everyone that he has never, ever, seen anything like that, so he'll pay everyone's bill. We all applaud.

Outside in the parking lot, as we are all walking toward our cars, Nick asks Jimmy how he can stomach all that stuff.

"I'll eat anything," explains Jimmy.

"Uh huh," says Nick.

"And besides, I'm gonna puke anyway," says Jimmy, "That's why they call me Jimmy Barf. Anyway, last week I earned a quarter, tonight I earned a dollar."

Nick is about to say something about the dollar but Jimmy lurches forward and pukes out a gooey mixture of used food, ketchup, cigarette butts, ashes, spit, mucus, and corn syrup all over our pants and the ground.

We stand there looking at Jimmy, who is wiping his mouth, our ruined pants, and the pile of vomit on the ground. Then Jimmy looks at our pants, and the pile of vomit.

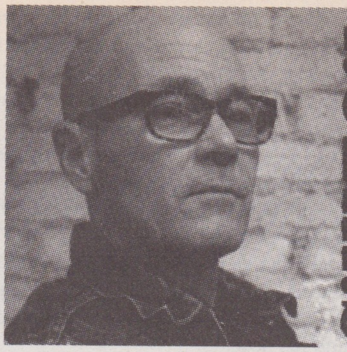
He looks at us, then the vomit.

"I'll eat anything," he says.

Punk Rock. Take My Life, Please.

Endnotes:

1. www.georgetabb.com
2. *Playing Right Field: A Jew Grows In Greenwich* is my book that's out now. Please buy it and help support my dog.
3. Find me on myspace.com. Lots of other MRR "celebs" are on it, and we all secretly talk about what's really punk rock. Like Brooks Brother's shirts, and EMacs.
4. If you are a touring band and thinking of playing Phoenix, please do. Best people in the world here.



ROEHRS

BLOODBATH

THE STEAM PIG from Dublin, Ireland is back with two CDs of that trademark raucous punk that has become their signature sound. Punk Shit Records in conjunction with Jacinta's offshore holdings has two CDs for you. This band of punks has political venom in their lyrics and rock n' roll in their blood. THE STEAM PIG has been around since 1994 and has kept up the consistent attack on everything that they perceive as unjust in the world. The punk music is hard driving with full fisted guitar and excellent gruff vocals on top.

The first Punk Shit CD by THE STEAM PIG has thought-provoking, intelligent lyrics. Read the words to "(Fitting Out For) Concrete Footwear"—We're ditching the dregs / Pond life on Liffy Wharf / Strap 'em to the low tide mark / We'll sit and watch the water rise / There's a friction on the surface / Bubbles rising everywhere / We're fitting out for concrete footwear / Send the bastards to the sea bed... / Who's raising the voices of the dead battalions now / Some Mothers scum / Like fly to shit / Is waiting in the wings now... / There's whiggers in the boozer / Singing Motown karaoke / Buying airbrushed R&B / But they don't want the real thing living next door / Experts on the airwaves / Flogging foreign policy / A puppet on a toilet chain / Spewing blueprints for the nation / Tell me, where will you be any given night / Fucking around with the white trash wives / Singing the praise of violent scum / Dancing in the urine river run / We've given the random hammer attack / A spiritual home – right here on the map / Another snackbox full of teeth / Another night of bullshit on the street / We're fitting concrete footwear for you." Good shit!

The second song on *Potshots* is equally intelligent. The hard punk rock accompanies a poetic approach to bleak subjects. Read the lyrics to "Bloodbath on Blessington Street": "Safe in my hideaway / I stare down from the window / I watch them pass along the way / Upstanding citizens / The simple and the wretched / The bland, the sheep like underaged / Down on those greasy streets / The streams of piss, the pools of spew / The tokens of the vacuous at play / Down on those greasy streets / A grasping hand, a battered face / The human waste who's sad life ebbs away / I'm in the public house / I eavesdrop on their wisdom / The bile they spew, it makes me retch / Blind ignorance / It never ceases to amaze me / "Salt of the earth", the filthy dregs / I take a walk / And chance upon some merry revelers / They plan to pulverize and maim / The air is thick with fear / Their prey, it smells the danger / Just close your eyes pal, feel the pain / "Intelligentsia", I see 'em here, I see 'em there / They wear me down, my nerves begin to fray / My mind it rots, I'm paranoid, not what I used to be / They're killing me, I'll make the bastards pay."

The next song is "I Got the Clap from the Girl from Crass" and this song title is self-explanatory. Song five is another deep lyrical challenge. Read the words on "Turnpike": "Drop it down / Won't make a mark / Join a sect / Of dumb commuters all around / Come with me / We'll suck you in / A turnpike hell / That leads you to the promised land / So why can't we all move around for free? / There's too many people making a living off our misery / But I never said that we would all agree / Fuck all your solutions, they add to the problem / How can we all believe? / Drop it down / Take offense / A turnpike hell / And we're not smiling anymore / Over the edge / We watch you go / Take a dive / And come into the promised land / So why can't we all move around for free? / A token rejection of how we are living / You just can't be happy / But I never said that we would all agree / There's too much red tape / And fuck your tribunal / You just can't be happy." Fuck yes! THE STEAM PIG can turn a phrase!

Song six is the title cut, "Potshots": "We're all just sitting ducks / Moving targets / We're easy prey." Song seven is "Liquid Breakfast", and as every drinker has done – at least once – the protagonist "utters the immortal words 'I'll never drink again!'" Song eight is "Contempt" – read these happy words: "Seeking out compassion / but finding only contempt / And now it's all that's left / Keep your nose in the trough / Lap it all up / Eyes closed / Ears shut / Brain in neutral / Mouth in top gear / A shining face / Meets a vacant stare / Invade, evade, remove / Disturbed, your bubble's burst". Fuck Yes!!!

Song ten is another punk rock masterpiece—"One Horse Town." Read these opinions: "I watch you shame yourself / Subnormal inbred fuck / Another simple mick / Your country's sickest joke / You scare me, disturb me / Hope they day never dawns / That I'll end up like you / You're beaten, you're bleeding / Lying face down on the pavement / Reminisce about your one horse town / Should have stayed right there / But you're all around me now / Wish you never left your one horse town / Should have killed yourself / But you're all around me now / Sober reflection brings remorse / And abject shock / Consummate Irishman abroad, a laughing stock / Bar brawler, church goer, labourer / Republican, the clichés mount on you / Prizefighter, leech, leper / Squaring up to kids on the corner / March 17th brings a bonanza for your kind / Free food and drink, off to the boozer / Tired old rebel songs will stimulate dull minds / You stepped off the boat, your life was over." Yes!

Besides playing great music, THE STEAM PIG offers complex analyses of day-to-day situations. The last song is "Destructive Forces" THE STEAM PIG exits on an uplifting thought! This is a great CD!

The second THE STEAM PIG CD on Punk Shit Records this month is the *Bastard Ugly Everything* CD. Read the words to "Cluster Bombs"—"In isolation we find solace, bittersweet as it may be / A vacuum of our own making / Our kindred spirits are engulfed / By baying hordes of death machines / Their ghosts haunt but we keep running on and on / Exorcising demons once again / Never found the drub to numb the pain / Last attempt to solder on in vain / And then collapse / Extreme solutions fall like cluster bombs / Exploding on our brains / A symptom of what surrounds us / Toys of the goldfish generation chime / And render us insane / The mind rots but we continue on and on." Yes !!!

THE STEAM PIG rolls through "Prolife Bint" and gets to "Redundant," This song is somewhat discomforting, touching on many queasy emotional nerve endings. Read "Redundant": "Drawn backwards down a one way street / Just let me go, I'll find my way / Where mind and matter seldom meet / Maybe I'll join you there someday / So many sections incomplete / Achilles heel for all to see / Sorrow, regret, tools of the weak / Now lay yourself bare / They'll pick your carcass clean / Decimate yourself / Until there's nothing left / Caught in a web of drifting twisted souls / Does anything remain? / Decimate yourself / Until there's nothing left / A treasure trove of shit to find and share / You envy the indifferent / They learn a little less each day / Refueling long redundant brains / With any item on display / Psychosis running rampant / Weary of me, afraid of them / No entry, doors are closing / So pick yourself back up / And do it all again." That was a harrowing experience!

The next tune, "Man Overboard," will not put your fears to rest. Read through some of these frightening images: "Morally bankrupt, but by who's standards / I see no guidelines here / Who is the slut, who is the saint / The borders indistinct / You say it's only a game / But I don't know the rules / You say it's only a game / But it seems to me to be you that's losing / Fresh meat in the window / The pig is on all fours / I'm drawn towards gluttony / Just what have you become / Half truths and veiled suggestions / Such mindless, endless toss / This haze it pacifies me / The sharks smell virgin blood / You say it's only a game / But I don't know the rules / You say it's only a game / But it looks like you've lost already / Twisting and turning, it never stops burning / I think that I've been here before / If we're all in the same boat, then I'm jumping ship / Cause I'd rather swim to the shore." Very good!!

THE STEAM PIG finishes you off with the title cut, "Bastard Ugly Everything" and "Trilobites." Read one last set of meaty lyrics—I believe you will find them disturbing :"Stuck on this ball of rock / We're plummeting in outer space / We're bastard ugly everything / We're stranded... / Suffering this cheap vendetta / Paddling a sea of spew / We're vacuum packed and stacked away / It gets much worse than this... / Looming at zero / We're derisory, faded reflections of us / Bastard ugly everything surrounding me / Holding out for contrition / We're tailor made as infest / Looking for a reason to make sense of it all / We are the sediment / Erratics scattered everywhere / The dirty rotten spores of man / It gets much worse than this / We call this culture / Raise up the parasites / Venerate as sacred / Clogging a gaping hole / Looming at zero..." Fucking great!!!! With each

These two CDs continue to strengthen the already legendary reputation of mighty THE STEAM PIG. Get these CDs at once! Write to THE STEAM PIG, Box 7674, Dublin 1, Ireland; www. thesteampig.com.

BEER PRESSURE, from Baton Rouge, Louisiana has a new CD offering called *Here's To You*. These punks and skins have been playing their brand of skinhead rock throughout the South for four years and have developed a fan base from Florida to Texas and beyond. BEER PRESSURE harnesses the great guitar and vocal dynamics that THE WRETCHED ONES perfected so many years ago in New Jersey. BEER PRESSURE slams into the first tune, "Be Loud Be Proud," and this fucker rocks. Read on: "I went and voted today / So the world could hear what I say / Just one of the reasons / I live in the USA Fuck yes!

BEER PRESSURE rumbles right through "Powder," a song about one of their drinking buddies and slide into their tribute to recreational drinking and backyard sport activities – a nice tune called "Horseshoes and Hand Grenades." The next song, "Where Are You?" expresses the frustration when someone lets you down. Read this: "It's the end of the workweek and I punch the clock / Friday's here we are ready to rock / It's half past ten and where the fuck are you? / All the boys are here you missed a hell of a night / Where were you? / It's Saturday I can't wait for the game / You said let's meet up for some dogs and brew / The game is over and where the fuck are you? / Hoping next week you get a fucking clue / Where were you? / It's the end of the workweek and I kick the clock / Told me about a keg party down the block / The beers all gone and where the fuck are you? / Even hippies agree we can't count on you / Where were you?"

Next, the BEER PRESSURE guys crunch your skull with "Backstreet Alleys" where working class skinhead kids grew up. Read this anthem: "We were two young men – with mayhem on our minds / Beer in our veins—and rejected all the time / We found our comfort in the backstreet alleys and bars / Listening to music and working real hard / We kept the faith—we never gave in / Stuck together through thick and thin / When I look back—it makes me proud / Two working class kids—who got by." Yes! That message is quite clear!

Next up is "Spit in the Air," a fine tune about drinking at the punk rock club. This is a very high-spirited song! Next you get "12 Hour Shift," swhich gives the working men and women some well-deserved respect. Read this: "The pride is for the men and women who work hard all day / This pride is for the people who make this country great / To all their hope and dreams from coast to coast / To all the drinking bastards who never miss a toast / When life hits you, you gotta keep on the ball / Sometimes it gets rough, it makes you want to crawl / I f you need a helping hand, don't hesitate to ask / For my friends and family I'll take on any task." Excellent!

BEER PRESSURE plows through "Chat Room Rock n' Roll" and relates this thought- "They All Know You're Full of Shit." Song number ten is "Here's To You," the title cut, and this song finishes the CD up in fine fashion with the perfect blue collar saga—read this: "We don't go out on the weeknights / We'd rather be at home instead / And we don't go out on a work night / We're with our old ladies in bed / So call us the weekend warriors / That's fine cuz that's what we are / Come Friday night happy hour / You know that we're down at the bar / Down the bar rock 'n' roll / Is what we like to hear / If you sing along with us / Then here's to you friend, cheers / Don't call me after eleven / You know I'm in bed by then / So I can get up at 5 AM / That's when my workday begins / But what I cannot lie to you / You might catch me out during the week / Sometimes I go out on Wednesday / And stay drunk 'til Monday morning." Yes! Those are the joys of working for a living!

Contact these rock and roll skinheads by writing Ira at 1186 Sharynwood Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, www.beerpressure.com.

Until next month—see you fucks at the bar!

by Josh Stein

In his April column Felix brought up the issue of sweatshop labor in shirt manufacturing, this raises many questions and concerns. What does this mean for punk bands that, as Felix shows, rely more and more on their merch sales than their album? Why is this an issue punks should be involved in? What options are there for bands that no longer wish to support exploitive labor?

Nowadays it's extremely rare to see a touring band play a show without having a shirt design or two for sale. If you're in a band that tours, you probably have had a shirt for sale at one point or another. If you are reading this column, its very likely own a few of these gems yourself, and are probably wearing one for that matter.

Maybe you've even seen an anti-sweatshop demonstration, or heard a lecture from ex-Gap laborers and you already understand the underlying issues of why this is important. Regardless let's work under the assumption that in addition to liking punk music, you are aware and at least somewhat passionate about social justice in a broad sense. Can you support a system that works against this?

Corporations need to provide goods at the lowest possible cost to ensure they remain competitive, foreign markets need to remain competitive by providing the cheapest possible labor and factory overheads. This connection allows the retailers to control the purchase prices through constant demand of their suppliers. The suppliers then control the production by demands of the factory. The factory then must meet the rock bottom pricing demanded up the chain, keeping working conditions at the barest minimums of safety, wages extremely low, and exploitative punishment systems in place for slow work and mistakes to ensure a consistent outflow. This leaves the labor force earning very little in poor conditions.

It's a common argument that the work that sweatshops provide is invaluable to the communities that they employ. This may very well be true, due to the system creating the need for the cheapest possible labor. But it doesn't end with the exploited labor. With working more than 40 hours a week, and getting paid 35 cents an hour, there is normally not much left after basic necessities. This forces many workers into a cycle of debt.

Some would also argue that the sweatshops are inevitable for prices to remain competitive. If the margins are this razor-thin, how are the pays for the heads of the textile corporations still in the millions? Would most consumers really balk at a higher price tag knowing the cheaper product was made in a sweatshop? Here's where we bring the punks back in.

If it was clear that a Fruit of the Loom "Tragedy" shirt was made in a sweatshop, would you still be as interested in purchasing it? Would you purchase an $8 band shirt you knew was made from sweatshop labor while you could buy a $10 or $12 shirt you knew was not.

CrimethInc. Workers' Collective Bullet-in

Last month, we covered how to do a proper Copwatch program; this month, continuing with that theme, we cover what to do if the police come to your house or community space.

As current editor of the CrimethInc. MRR column, let me personally take this space, before it's time to get professional and focus on practical matters, to express my deep, abiding hatred for all police officers. I try not to be a hateful, spiteful person, so I don't really want all cops to get killed, but I do want them all to quit their jobs, so I think it's great when I see things like "KILL ALL COPS" spraypainted on walls—it helps police officers know how others feel about them, so they can reconsider the compromises they are making with the system of racist, classist oppression. I don't think I'm alone in this sentiment, either.

For more ammunition, including free literature, punk music, and dangerous books, write us at CrimethInc. Guardians of Outlaw and Disorder, P.O. Box 2133, Greensboro, NC 27402 USA. We also have a webpage, for those who have enough fucking class privilege to get Internet access; it is www.crimethinc.com.

Handling a Police Raid

If police knock on your door, do not invite them inside; step outside and close the door before speaking to them, locking it behind you if need be. If there are other people in the house, make them aware that the police are present. Don't address other people in the house by name; let them decide how they want to identify themselves. After saying clearly "I do not consent to this search," stand aside and maintain silence. Do not answer any questions.

If you are arrested or detained in the course of a raid, do not resist unless it is absolutely imperative that you escape and there is a high likelihood that you will be able to do so; instead, calmly ask on what basis you are being held. Don't volunteer any information or answer any questions except when you are asked to identify yourself. No matter what they tell you, speaking to the police can never accomplish anything except making things worse for you and those you care about. If you have a lawyer, upon interrogation—whether formal or informal, whether by federal agents or local officers—simply present your lawyer's card and state, "You can speak with my lawyer." If you don't have a lawyer, assert and maintain that you will seek legal counsel before answering questions.

If the police say they have a warrant, ask to see it but do not at that point resist the search. A warrant is simply a piece of paper signed by a judge; it should have an address and some terms of the search. It is not valid without a judge's signature. In most cases, the police cannot enter your residence legally without a warrant. To get a warrant, they must have probable cause and a judge must sign his or her name validating this; judges can be sneaky, but they also don't want any heat to come back on them. This is why we often don't see warrants used in activist raids: there simply isn't the probable cause. If they can't get a warrant, the police may try to use other pretexts to get in: fire code violations, health violations, looking for people who have warrants out for their arrest. Educate yourself on local laws and municipal code. If the police come by when there is someone inside who has a warrant, it may be best for that person to go outside so the police cannot use this as a justification for entering the building.

If your space may be raided, decide in advance how you will handle this. Except in a few specific cases—for example, if you are engaged in a political squatting action with widespread community support, and you intend to resist eviction by militant means—it will make the most sense to cooperate carefully with the police, and then take revenge later by legal or extra-legal means. Determine with everyone involved what image you will try to project—"nonviolent peace activists suffering unjust police harassment," for example—and maintain it from the beginning of the process through the follow-up media and court campaigns. Hold discussions in advance, so everyone who may be affected by a police raid knows what to expect, how to conduct themselves, and what their role will be in your response. Make sure everyone is comfortable with the decisions made and understands each other's needs.

Sometimes a police raid will come as a surprise. Other times, especially if they are planning a raid on a larger scale, such as at an infoshop, activist house, or convergence space during a mass mobilization, you may be able to see it coming. Stay aware: if they are escalating their surveillance of your building or your activities, this may culminate in a raid. This surveillance may take the form of infiltration by undercover agents, who may be easy to recognize as such—on account of poor acting, suspicious questions, or suddenly getting involved right before an action—or very difficult to detect.

If you are involved in any kind of activity that demands security, your collective should decide ahead of time how careful to be in working with others who desire to get involved in your group and in actions you plan. Do you need to have a vouching system to protect against loose-lipped liberals and undercover cops? Or do you want to work with large numbers of people to such an extent that it makes more sense to leave things wide open? Some collectives decide not to take on last-minute stragglers right before an action: police infiltrators usually show up late, because there isn't enough funding to put them in earlier.

If you are on good terms with groups that are in dialogue with the authorities, they may be able to tip you off when a raid is nigh; likewise, locals familiar with the workings of the local police force might be able to provide useful insights. For a serious raid, the police will establish a staging area a couple blocks from the location, which may give away their plans at the last minute if nothing else has.

In preparing for a potential raid, be conscious of what you have on the premises and what can be found nearby in dumpsters and adjacent lots. Make sure nobody has any illegal drugs or paraphernalia, recognizably stolen items, or other material which authorities could use against you. Police officers will routinely confiscate such standard household items as paint thinner and PVC pipe and claim the possessors were using them to make bombs. Such ludicrous charges will not generally stand up in court, but they can enable the police to denounce your group to the public; they can also paralyze individuals, preventing them from participating in serious actions until their court cases are finished.

Knives, spray paint, gasoline, anarchist literature, bottles of urine, and other similarly dangerous articles will all be needless liabilities when the police show up, unless you're actually planning to fight them off with the stuff. Be conscious of what can be seen even when your doors are shut and locked; the police can use items "in plain view" to look further, even without a warrant. In extreme cases, the courts have declared it permissible for the police to enter a home to investigate further after seeing

something suspicious through a window. Be careful to follow the very letter of the law: police who can find nothing else to use against you may ticket you for parking more than ten inches from the curb, for example.

Have a phone tree in place, to be activated in the case of a raid: there should be a couple numbers you can call to reach people who can instantly call others, and so on, until a large number of people have been informed. It is important that there is always at least one person off-site who knows what to do if he or she is the only person not arrested.

Don't leave phone lists or similar information accessible to the police; there's no sense in doing their intelligence work for them. If those informed by the phone tree converge immediately upon the space being raided, this will force the police to restrain themselves, and show them and the community at large that this is an issue many take seriously; in a best case scenario, this can even transform the raid into a positive, community-building event. Have local media ready to come: don't miss the chance to have the local alternative or pirate radio station report live from your raid, or to get sympathetic coverage in the alternative press. Plan in advance what spin you want to give the story, so the police play into your hands. Compose a press release ahead of time and have it ready to go out.

If you fear a police raid is possible or imminent, keep a video camera charged and equipped with a blank tape, ready for use in documenting police conduct. You can also hide secret cameras on the premises; these may prove especially important if the police break their own laws in the course of invading your space. Get every single badge number and license plate, and record every movement and action of each individual police officer; in court, it will be very much to your advantage if you can prove that, for example, a police officer who claims he remained outside during the raid was actually upstairs knocking over bookshelves and breaking things. Your camera people should be levelheaded; even if things are heating up, it may be more important in the long run for them to record events as they unfold, calmly and consistently, than to get involved.

Once you've got documentation, keep track of it. Don't edit or adjust it in any way. Be able to prove that your footage has been in your "line of possession" from the time you recorded it to the time it appears in court; this means you should be able to document everywhere it has been, and show that it has been in the care of good, law-abiding citizens the whole time—and as few of these as possible. To this end, it can be wise to leave your material with someone's conservative parents or responsible sister-in-law; this can also be a way to make sure it is not seized in a secondary raid. Keep an organized journal, with times and dates and signatures, detailing all your observations from the time you first begin to fear a raid might take place. After one occurs, compile written narratives, with signatures, from all witnesses and participants, while the events are still fresh in everyone's minds.

If you're in the middle of organizing an action or campaign from the space that may be raided, make sure it won't be crippled by a raid. Keep important materials elsewhere, make sure that all the people in pivotal organizing positions are never in the space all at once, see to it that there are other spaces to which activities can be shifted. Establish a place to get back together after the raid or ways to reestablish contact with one another and make sure that everyone is accounted for.

When bringing suit against the city over a raid, work out the local chain of command and sue as high in the hierarchy as you can. Those who hold power will attempt to portray any misconduct as the anomalous incompetence of individual underlings; your job is to show that the raid was orchestrated from on high and that the people at the top of the pyramid are to blame, if not the system itself. Get the best lawyer you can—the American Civil Liberties Union is generally a better resource than the National Lawyers' Guild when it comes to violations of 4th Amendment rights regarding search and seizure and 1st Amendment rights regarding freedom of speech. If you don't own the space that was raided, make sure you have the cooperation of the landlords: emphasize that they too can get something out of the proceedings. Keep the media informed throughout the affair, and keep the pressure on.

Account

As we were organizing a convergence against a particularly ridiculous meeting of politicians, it became evident that our city's Red Squad had its eyes on us. We continued our work, though we realized that, under the circumstances, we lacked the numbers to go forward with our original plans of turning the city into our playground. We narrowed our focus and message, deciding our best bet would be to embrace the image of pacifist peace activists: this would give us an advantage should the defenders of Power attempt a smear campaign against us. Having established this strategy, we decided that the weekend would go ahead as planned, with a festive street march and demonstrations outside the hotel where the politicians were meeting.

As the dates for the actions approached, we saw a steady increase in police traffic around our collective space, which was serving as a meeting and organizing point for the demonstrations. On multiple occasions, we experienced the unique pleasure of visits from undercover cops. Keeping tabs on liberal organizers we knew maintained ties with the police, we received additional clues that we were facing impending state repression, which was likely to take the form of a raid on our space.

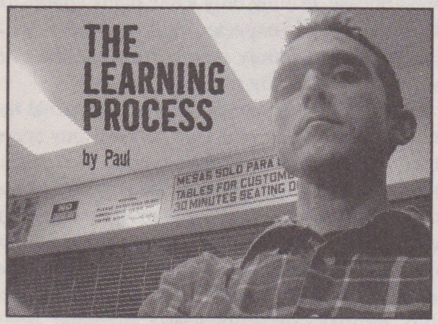
We met as a collective and resolved to act preemptively in order to minimize any possible harm we would suffer and, if possible, humiliate and expose the police. We started by compiling a phone tree of our friends and supporters in the community, as well as a list of local media contacts. Drawing on the precedents established by the numerous police invasions of autonomous spaces that summer, we took a number of precautions, such as removing items that had justified earlier absurd charges against revolutionaries: for example, we removed all kitchen knives and Vitamin C pills, since cooking utensils and supplements had been considered weapons and drugs in other raids. We also cleaned the space and planted new flowers around the house, hoping this would make the police look even more ridiculous should they choose intrude on our space. We stockpiled photo and video cameras, tape recorders, note pads, and other recording devices, and spread them throughout the house, both openly and covertly. We made sure that at least one of the collective members was downstairs at all times, and that our door was always locked—though this was particularly difficult, with so many people coming in and out. People who could not risk arrest stayed at other locations.

Everyone who spent time in the space was briefed on the situation and developed an understanding of the collective's rights. In a move that later proved to be of some importance, we painted the door with some "house rules," including bans on weapons, animal products, and substances. This has since been used in both the media and in legal decisions as a further embarrassment to the police. We also prepared a press release, leaving only a few blank spaces for the details of the expected raid, and left it with an uninvolved family member in case the raid was accompanied by numerous arrests.

Busy as we were with organizing against the meetings, we were still able to keep our space open for concerts and other events. Two nights before the planned protests began, the police arrived during one of these shows, an apolitical folk performance. The raid caused quite a bit of alarm for the artists and visitors! At that time, some of us were leaving to work on the pirate ship puppets—described as "anarchist body armor" in police reports to the media—that we were planning to use for street theater. As we were loading the ships into a pickup truck, we noticed that police vehicles were assembling at every nearby intersection and decided to attempt to leave. As soon as we began driving, we were pulled over for the most minute of traffic violations. We called back to the space, where police were already knocking on the door. We set in motion our well-planned phone tree, calling our lawyers, leaving reports on answering machines, and informing scores of friends that we were in trouble. It turned out that the police had used supposed fire code violations to get into the house, because it is standard practice in our city for housing inspectors to be "protected" by police. Each cop and each inspector were followed everywhere by comrades from our ranks who documented everything. The police went through our book selection, our kitchen, our desks, our basement, our storage areas, even our bathroom, not to mention the personal belongings of those living upstairs. They searched our whole house and the squatted house next door. They towed our cars, on the ridiculous pretension that they were parked three inches too far from the curb! In the end, they didn't use violence or arrests; they just hoped to scare us and reveal our supposedly violent machinations to the public.

The phone tree, however, paid off. The local media as well as a slam poetry group showed up immediately, along with about fifty of our friends. In conjunction with the drumming and the constant flash of still cameras, the slam poets created an atmosphere of festive defiance and creatively informed the media and curious passers-by about just how fucked up this situation was. While normally hostile to radicals, the local corporate media could not resist covering the obvious foolishness of the police, who wandered about the property en masse with bomb-sniffing dogs while obviously earnest and nonviolent activists explained how the events of the evening were—can you believe it?—causing them to "lose faith in this society."

Thanks to the thoroughness of our preparations, we were able to upstage law enforcement prior to the main event of the protests themselves; this coup gave us much-needed attention and credibility. Additionally, afterwards we were able to succeed in suing the city for tens of thousands of dollars. This enabled us to fund many new subversive projects, which the forces of order are even less equipped to deal with in the aftermath of their ill-thought-out raid.



Wouldn't it be nice?

Since I have decided to become an official coordinator here at *Maximumrocknroll* (Hooray! Thank you.) my mind has been completely occupied with MRR-related business, ideas, worries, hopes, etc. As for worries, writing a column is one my biggest concerns. I am very insecure about putting my thoughts and opinions out into the world. I don't want to hurt anyone's feelings; I don't want to sound like an idiot; I don't want to be boring, preachy, cocky, sappy, or predictable, but I am afraid of all of these things. In fact, I'm sure I will do all of these things, so let's get on with it.

We're very excited about Bound Together Books' 10th annual Anarchist Book Fair this weekend. Am I an anarchist? Well, if someone were to put a gun to my head and force me to put a one-word label on my political beliefs, after shitting my pants I'd probably say anarchist. But let's face it, it's very trendy, very *safe*, in punk rock to call yourself an anarchist. And although I do have a soft spot in heart for anarchism, I cannot ignore the fact that it's bullshit. Anarchism is a utopian philosophy, and historically utopian philosophies are very, very dangerous things. I don't think I even have to mention Hitler, Mao, Reagan, David Koresh, etc. so I won't. (Oops...). Any established political philosophy (or "ism") is kind of just another way of saying "wouldn't it be nice if things work this way?" And in that respect, pretty much any "ism" would be just fine for the world. Bush-ian capitalism would work if everyone would just be happy with their shitty jobs, be good consumers, not worry about the environment, and entrust churches and the philanthropic rich to take care of anyone who falls through the cracks. Wouldn't that be nice? But of course the world doesn't work way, and not everyone will buy into that philosophy. The only way an ism will really work is if *everyone* buys in, and that will just never happen.

So my brilliant idea is that we all start looking at what actually *does* work, instead of trying to build a utopia. A utopia by definition doesn't exist; it's the ultimate ideal of what could exist. Do I have any specific ideas? How about this: you think 'em up for yourself.

But I do have some suggestions: Don't ignore mainstream politics. Please, please don't. This is where things are actually happening in the here and now. Read the newspaper, watch that horrible TV news, listen to NPR, and tune in (only every once in a while) to the right-wing talk shows. Then check out as much foreign news as you can. Deutsche Wella (the German news in English) seems to be pretty accessible on public TV in the US. Go to the websites for Al Jazeera, and Asian and Australian newspapers. You have to know where the rest of the country and the world are coming from if you want to debate politics in a relevant way. You should also check out independent, leftist media like IndyMedia.org (and the *MRR* News section), but keep in mind that these are coming from admittedly skewed viewpoints. Read them and think about them. Question them and criticize them. What's important is that you find out the truth, or at least what is true for you.

The world of punk politics is very intimidating to me. I'm not sure why. Maybe it's because there is a strong hatred for liberalism in general. On our side of the fence the term "liberal" is code for "not radical enough." To be radical is to be cool and very punk. To be liberal is to want to be radical, but not have the balls. I find this to be very disconcerting. I mean, we've got a Republican president who is about to take away women's right to abortion, and we're over here arguing about who is and isn't radical. The sad fact is that if more of us had voted for that asshole Kerry, we might have saved abortion rights. And somehow, I'm gonna get a lot of shit for saying that.

But I do love anarchism. In it's purest form it's the only political philosophy that says: "Think for yourself; don't listen to me or anyone else; create your own structures and rules; be free." How can you not agree with that?

So come on—let's have debates and discussions, and very importantly, let's not be afraid to learn and change our minds every once in a while.

*

Hey, that's my bike!

On another note, you may notice the ad in this issue about records that have been stolen from the MRR library. We were going to put it in last month's issue but we wanted to make sure that no one thought it was an April Fool's joke. This is no fucking joke. I can't tell how livid I am, as are many folks around the world who are familiar with our record collection. As a result of these thefts, we've had to stop putting up touring bands, and we're locking up our most valuable (remaining) records. It sucks that we can't trust everyone to respect each other solely based on being punks. But that would be a bit utopian now, wouldn't it?

Fuck authority, record thieves, apolitical punks, and that guy who hits on girls in Amoeba. Much love to Aaron, Erin, Ariel, and Errol Flynn. Peace out.

Paul Curran, PO Box 190054, SF, CA 94119
paul@maximumrocknroll.com

P.S. Do you like our wicked awesome cover this month? Check out more of Cristy Road's art at www.croadcore.org

Punk has undergone a number of changes in its nearly thirty years of existence. This is something for us to be proud of—if real stagnation ever set in, we'd be nothing but retro cool at best and washed up and pathetic at worst. Fashions change from year to year, and vary from locale to locale, all while tastemakers and flies-on-the-wall alike come into punk then drop out, absorbing what they can while leaving their marks through the ephemera they spread around—the fanzines, the letters, the overheard comments at the basement show. Bands put out demos and records as they tour the world, traveling the paths blazed by countless bands before them, though somehow, the best of them still achieve a spontaneity and spark all their own. The best moments in punk can read like a yearbook entry, or a fanzine column—"we played a buncha shows with friends, saw a killer band, hung out in front of the club, drank, laughed, bought records." The clichés come fast and easy in these cases: "I have never had this much fun." It seems to me that even with the constant change in punk, all of the turnover and turmoil, we have a shared ethic—one that is as irreverent as it is honest—that acts as a glue that holds all of our collective craziness together.

This ethic has to do with the trust inherent in the DIY approach. You have to put your faith in people in order to book a punk tour, put out a band's record, or, if I may say, coordinate a fanzine. What could be worse, then, for the longevity of the punk scene than violations of that trust? This is why through the years, so many of us have decried all the backdoor deals with corporate labels, all the well-it's-not-like-we-signed-to-Sony infractions of our commitment to DIY, all of those who would sell us out to

the highest bidder. It's illustrative to go through old issues of *MRR* for instances of the punks fighting back against the greedy and dishonest among us, because when punk was still new we didn't take corporate interest, "professional" middle men, or unethical individuals as given, and we certainly didn't take these things lightly. These days, it seems that many of us are content to consider ourselves a niche market ("what records did *you* buy?") that trades in the shallowest kind of credibility, rather than as a viable counterculture with something to say about the world around us, not to mention our own little place in it. Sure, punk is about anger, which lends to our destructive tendencies, but while I can empathize with (and engage in) the sort of self-sabotage that comes hand-in-hand with not being able to run with the herd, it's hard for me to relate to—let alone accept—the sort of crass commercialism or thoughtless posturing that seems commonplace in the punk scene today.

Rather than have this column run though a laundry list of complaints, I should use the space I have to give cheers to what still keeps punk vital. Sure, it seems like every day, a once-hardcore band signs to a big corporate label, somebody rips off a band, a label, or a zine, a "punk" writes some racist or homophobic bullshit on the Internet, or another formerly indie distributor signs a fucked up deal-with-the-devil type agreement with a major, but there is still reason for the real punks to know that we are not alone when we stand up and fucking fight. Every kid still doing a DIY distro, setting up shows in their basement, cutting and pasting their own fanzine, and having fun with their friends encourages the natural change and progression that punk needs to remain interesting and alive. Change isn't useful when it's demanded by the outside world, and besides, I am not interested in knowing what we would have to alter in order to become more acceptable by any standards other than our own. Of course, reconsideration is inevitable, even useful, but a wholesale abandonment of our values is not. I don't claim that punk will change the world—after all, it's just shoutin' and screamin'—but it doesn't seem like too much to ask for punk to *stay punk*, right?

With so many punks obsessed with the past, it's hard to believe that we've forgotten so many lessons learned the hard way. What will it take for punks to learn that being punk is never about taking the easy way out? It takes hard work to *really* do it yourself, but the good thing about this is that punk demands greatness and shuns mediocrity. So, forget all the boring tripe, all of the shit talk and hare-brained attitudes. Play in a band (especially if you've never played an instrument), write something for *Maximum*, listen to *Nervous Breakdown*, thumb your nose to the bullies of the world, and fucking go start something great. Oh, and stay punk.

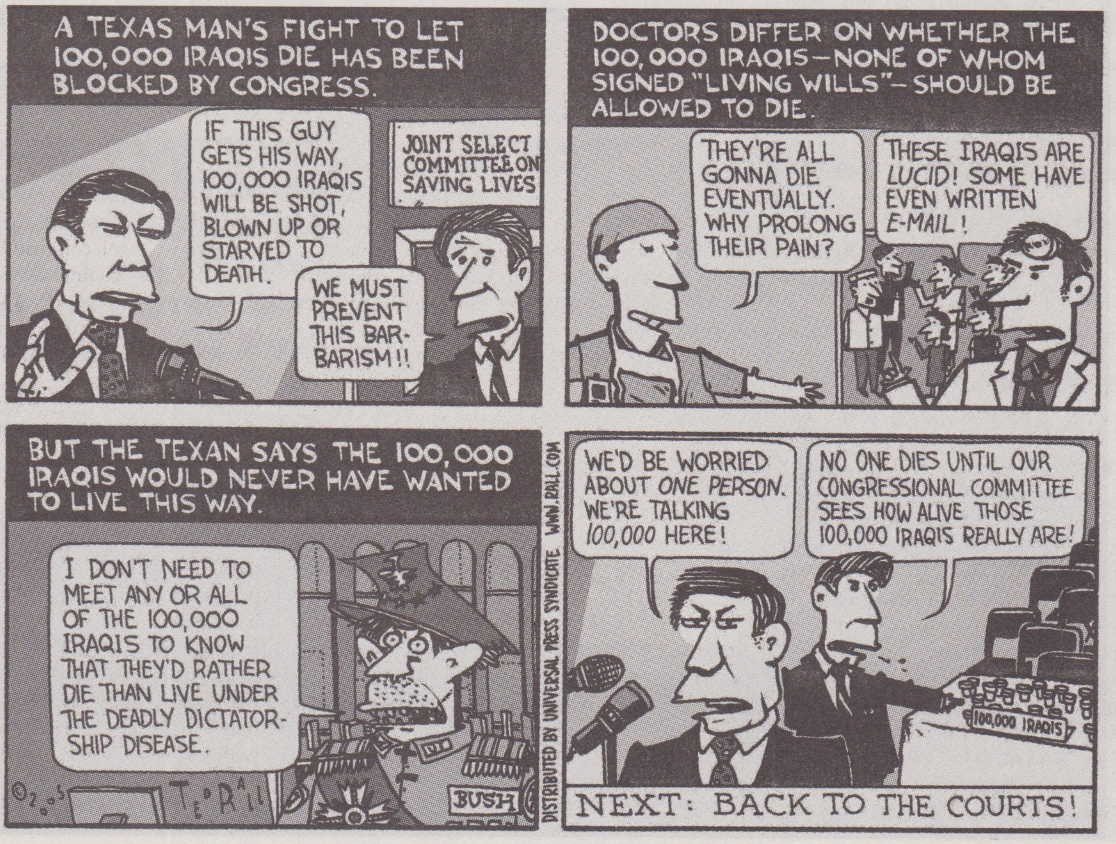
*

Hey, maybe you noticed already, but we've got a new coordinator. Paul Curran, whose column appears immediately to the left of mine, will be stepping into the role of full-time coordinator here at MRR, and I couldn't be happier. I want to thank all of the other people who sent in applications, inquired about the job, and extended their well-wishes to me in these solitary months. It's not impossible for one person to do all of the content coordinating here at *Maximumrocknroll*, but it is a lot more fun to share the ups and downs of putting out a monthly magazine with someone else. So, welcome Paul, and thanks.

There are a lot of things in the works at the magazine that you might be interested in. We are starting work on our first theme issue in a while, which will deal with major labels and major business in the punk scene. Maybe some of you remember our last major label theme issue. Well, we here at MRR *still* think that dealing with corporate labels or distros is like putting a gun to your head, but we'd like to hear from you about the matter, especially where specifics are concerned. Detailed articles are much appreciated, especially dealing with the ever prickly issue of how a punk record should be distributed. Remember, at its best, *MRR* (and other zines, of course) can reflect and encourage the internal debates within the punk scene; hopefully this issue will do some of that. So, c'mon punks, tell us what you think.

*

Hey, good news! The tidal wave of international bands touring the US does not seem to be receding. This is, by all accounts, an excellent thing. Gorilla Angreb is right around the corner, and I have not been more excited for a non-US band to play in the States since Totalitär. Please do not forget to support this worthy band. My soundtrack for this issue has included the Adolescents, Career Suicide, Poison Idea, RIP, The Raincoats, Scratch Acid, DV8, and Lebenden Toten. Write me an email (golnar@maximumrocknroll.com) to tell me what you've been listening to, what's on your mind, or something else altogether. See you next month.



Scotty Sleeth—03/06/2K5—New York

I first met Scotty a million years ago in NYC back when the Lower East Side was raw & fun—before all the yuppie cafes started opening—Scotty squatted at Fetus then when that building burned down he moved to Glass House & then to C Squat where he used to set up punk shows—C Squat was known as the most dangerous venue in NYC—I remember during one show the sewer pipe spilled out into the audience & so the punks were literally shit-faced—Scotty now lives in Pittsburgh where he runs his own construction business & he continues to travel the country (except Ohio) hopping trains & drinking beer. (to contact Fly email fly@bway.net—put MRR in the subject so I know its not spam—or snail mail Fly PO Box 1318 Cooper Stn NYC NY 10276)

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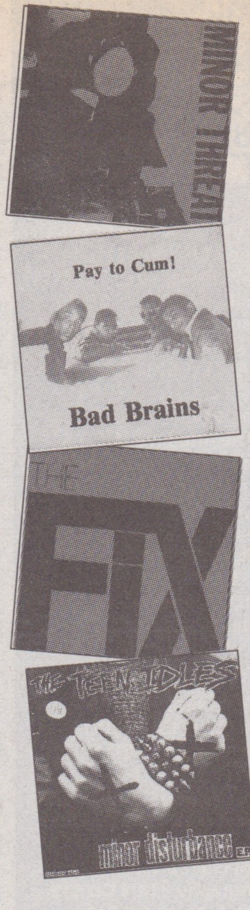

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MRR NEWS

MRR NEWS FOR ISSUE #264 COMPILED BY GOLNAR NIKPOUR

PALESTINIAN GROUPS REJECT JORDAN PLAN

by Khalid Amayreh, *Al Jazeera*

Palestinian leaders have rejected a Jordanian proposal calling for normalization of relations between Arab states and Israel. Leaders from across the political and ideological spectrum said they opposed the suggestion, which calls for normalization before ending the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, and Syria's Golan Heights. The proposal is due to be presented to the Arab League summit in Algeria on Monday.

"This would be a very grave concession," Sakhr Habash, a member of the Fatah central committee, said. "How could any Arab or Muslim leader embark on such a thing while Israel is still occupying our homeland and refusing to recognize our legitimate rights?" he said.

Speaking to Aljazeera.net on Saturday, Habash said any concessions to Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon would only make him want more. He described the Jordanian proposal as "amounting to a submission to Sharon's designs and American dictates."

Habash, a former adviser to the late Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat, criticized Arab officials who use Palestinian contacts with Israel as a pretext for normalizing with the Jewish state. "I know some Arab leaders would argue we cannot be more royal than the king or more Catholic than the pope. However, the Arabs should remember we are under Israeli occupation—we are actually prisoners in Israel's hands."

Another Palestinian leader, Azmi Shuaibi, accused the Jordanian government of compromising the Arab stance towards Israel since 1967. "I hope our Jordanian brothers will not break the long-standing Arab consensus vis-à-vis UN resolutions 242 and 338 and the principle of land for peace.

"Even [the late Jordanian king] Husain had refused to normalize with Israel until Jordan recovered all its territories from Israel. Jordan should not ask the Palestinians or the Arabs to do something that King Husain had refused to do." Shuaibi suggested the Jordanian proposal was an expression of the "constant retreat of Arab official-dom since the 9/11 events in the United States."

The Palestinian resistance group Hamas also denounced the Jordanian proposal, calling it "harmful and injurious to the feeling of every Palestinian man, woman, and child."

"This is a very harmful proposal, it is totally unacceptable," said Hasan Yusuf, Hamas spokesman in the West Bank. "How can our Arab brothers normalize relations with Israel while Israel is occupying our land...and keeping more than 7000 Palestinian and Arab political and resistance prisoners behind bars?"

He told Aljazeera.net that normalization with Israel under the present circumstances would amount to "a clear betrayal of Palestine and its struggling people."

"If we lost the normalization card, what other cards would we still have to make Israel come to terms with Palestinian and Arab rights?" Palestinian officials refused to comment on the Jordanian proposal.

On Friday, Jordanian Foreign Minister Hani al-Mulki denied reports that the Jordanian proposal was inconsistent with the united Arab stance on peace with Israel as expressed in the Arab summit in Beirut in 2002.

This month, Jordanian King Abd Allah said the Algerian summit should amend the Saudi Arabian initiative and take Israel's fears into account in order to get it to make concessions. The Saudi plan offers peace with Israel for the return of the Arab territories Israel seized in 1967 in accordance with UN resolutions 242 and 338. The plan also calls for the creation of a Palestinian state and a just resolution for the enduring issue of Palestinian refugees, expelled from their homes and towns when Israel was established in 1948.

"We were surprised that after the Beirut summit, the plan had no effect on Israeli society," Abd Allah told French Channel II in a 7 March interview. "We might have to explain it in a better way." Abd Allah added: "The real price is Israel's getting peace from the Arab states from Morocco to Oman on the Indian Ocean. Should we understand the fears of others, problems might be settled."

SENATE NOD TO ARCTIC OIL DRILLING STIFFENS OPPOSITION

by Abid Aslam, from OneWorld.net

Environmental and public interest groups are girding for renewed battle over oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge after the Senate endorsed the idea, handing a key victory to President George W. Bush and proponents of exploration.

Senators voted 51-49 in mid-March in favor of a budget resolution that assumes drilling fees would generate $5 billion in revenues over the next decade. The federal government and state of Alaska, the site of the refuge, would split the money. "This razor-thin vote is by no means a mandate to drill in the arctic refuge," said Carl Pope, executive director of the Sierra Club. "A strong, bipartisan coalition of Senators, backed by the will of the American people, will press on with a vigilant campaign to keep the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge where it belongs: wild and free and out of the budget."

The vote dealt a body blow to activists who had lobbied long and hard to block any move toward drilling in one of the last unspoiled regions of wilderness in North America.

At issue is about 1.5 million acres of coastal plain within the refuge, which covers 19 million acres in total. Oil industry representatives have said that drilling would be limited to about 2,000 acres within the 1.5 million acres, and that it could be done with minimal environmental damage.

For drilling to take place, the senators would have to pass a separate measure explicitly authorizing drilling in the refuge. Then the House of Representatives would have to explicitly authorize drilling. The House has endorsed arctic drilling in previous years and is expected to do so again this year so advocates from both sides saw this week's Senate vote as crucial.

A vote on the same matter last year defeated drilling 52-48 but the Republican party picked up four Senate seats in November, changing the chamber's voting arithmetic.

Seven Republicans and the Senate's lone independent sided with Democrats in opposing drilling this week. Three Democrats crossed party lines to give Republicans their two-vote victory.

Congress has failed to approve a final budget each of the last two years, largely because of add-ons promoting specific positions on abortion, creationism, or other politically prickly issues.

This week's vote "only succeeded in adding more controversy to an already controversial and difficult budget process," said Buck Parker, executive director of Earthjustice, a California-based public interest law firm.

A failure to pass a budget this year would nullify the Senate approval and require a drilling bill to get not just 50 votes but rather the 60 votes necessary to spare it from a filibuster, a procedural tactic in which lengthy speeches are used to stall a vote on a given measure.

Bush, in a statement, applauded the Senate vote. "A reliable domestic supply of energy is important to America's security and prosperity," he said, adding that the refuge eventually could yield up to one million barrels of oil a day.

The United States uses about 20.8 million barrels of oil a day. If the refuge were opened to drilling, its oil would take about a decade to come online, Senate Democrats said, adding that conservation efforts and tighter fuel standards could make a greater impact much sooner.

"Drilling the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge won't make a dent in gas prices at the pump or break our dependence on Middle East oil," said Karen Wayland, legislative director at the Natural Resources Defense Council.

The US Energy Information Administration has estimated that Americans' energy demand could increase by about 30 percent over the next 20 years. Democrats said that if Americans somehow managed to hold their oil consumption at today's levels, the refuge might hold a total of six months' worth of the fuel.

The American Petroleum Institute, representing the oil industry, said 10.4 billion barrels of oil were thought to lie beneath the tundra and this estimate could double once exploration started. The refuge "could provide the equivalent of current oil imports from Saudi Arabia for more than 20 years," it said in a statement.

Coal, oil, and gas provide 86 percent of US energy consumption, the Government Accountability Office, Congress's investigative arm, reported this week. It urged policymakers to curb demand and to avoid sudden or short-lived policy changes so consumers, suppliers, and investors get "consistent signals" and don't contribute to the volatility of energy prices.

This week's Senate vote also could ease the way for Congress to pass Bush's energy plan, which collapsed during his first term amid disagreement over Alaska drilling.

A Zogby International poll found last December that 55 percent of Americans favored keeping oil companies out of the arctic refuge.

The area is home to pristine tundra and some 100 bird and animal species. Native Alaskan communities along the coastal plain live off the land and water. For many, caribou in particular represent a cultural compass point and a staple of their diet.

President Dwight Eisenhower, a Republican, created the refuge in 1960. Congress expanded it in 1980 and said the 1.5 million acre coastal plain could be opened to oil development only if lawmakers specifically authorized it. Efforts to get them to do so began soon after.

IRAQI NATIONAL ASSEMBLY MEETS FOR THE FIRST TIME

From The Electronic Iraq

The new Iraqi National Assembly, elected two months ago in an historic poll, met for the first time on Wednesday amid tight security, but the meeting ended without a deal to form a new government.

Despite a heavy police and army presence in the area around the parliament and the closure of many surrounding streets, shortly before proceedings got under way, four explosions rattled windows in the convention center where parliament was sitting. But the attacks failed to disrupt the meeting. The assembly was barely a third full at the time and there have been no reports of casualties so far.

Iraqis had keenly anticipated the meeting and many gathered around their TV sets to watch the occasion, which was broadcast live. Most watched with high expectations, hoping that despite ongoing insecurity, the country could take another step towards building a new Iraq.

"I decided not to go to my work this morning so I could hear the speeches at the new assembly meeting. I believe that it's important for all Iraqis to participate in the rebuilding of our country," Salah Ibraheem, 43, shopkeeper in the Mansour district of the capital, told IRIN.

But little progress was made as the Shi'ite alliance, which won just over half the seats in the 275-member assembly in January's poll, and the king-making Kurdish coalition failed to agree on the new government's composition.

A tentative agreement was made that Ibrahim Jaafari of the Shi'ite Dawa party would be prime minister and the head of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), Jalal Talabani, would be president. But the parties remained divided on the question of Kurdish demands for oil-rich Kirkuk to be incorporated into an autonomous northern zone.

The issue of a permanent constitution was also high on the agenda. Both the current Prime Minister Iyad Allawi and President Ghazi al-Yawar said that the new constitution should be as inclusive as possible.

HUNGER STRIKING FOR A LIVING WAGE

By David Swanson

Twenty-two students at Georgetown University in Washington, DC, stopped eating in mid-March. They have resorted to a hunger strike after years of less drastic attempts to persuade the university to pay all of its workers a living wage. How long will they go without food? "As long as it takes," is the answer that at least some of them give. Mary Nagle is one of a half dozen students organizing events every day to assist the hunger strikers. "Poverty wages are ridiculous," the students chant at rallies. "My Georgetown is better than this!"

Georgetown University's president is paid more than a living wage. According to tax forms, the president's salary rose from $345,529 in 1998 to $587,922 in 2003. No doubt it's higher now. Currently, in 2005, subcontracted workers at Georgetown need be paid only $8.50 per hour. Silvia Garcia, who for two years has worked as a janitor at Georgetown for P&R Enterprises, said she earns $9.05 per hour. That's $18,824 per year, if she works fulltime with no time off.

Other janitors at Georgetown who are employed directly by the university, and who are unionized, are paid at least $12.00 per hour, or $24,960 for a full year's work. These rates of pay do not approach a tenth of the president's. And they fall short of what many of the workers need to pay their bills. The hunger-striking students are demanding, on behalf of the workers, a living wage of $14.93 per hour in total compensation, including any benefits.

Silvia Garcia said that such an increase in pay would transform her life. Her son, Roberto Garcia, dropped out of high school a year and a half ago in order to work, because the family needed the income. (It gives new meaning to "Leave no child behind," doesn't it?) Roberto Garcia, like his mother, works as a janitor at Georgetown for P&R, earning $9.05. Both he and his mother would prefer to see him return to school. Mother and son both work fulltime. Their husband and father works elsewhere in town as a janitor earning $9.80. The three incomes are not sufficient to support the six-person family. They recently had to move further out of town in order to find cheaper rent, but they still struggle to pay it.

The current wages at Georgetown are far too low, Silvia Garcia said in Spanish. "People here work two jobs and leave their children alone. With a living wage, they could dedicate more time to their children and only have one job."

"They're great!" Silvia Garcia said in Spanish of the student hunger strikers. "We are very happy that the students have decided to help us, because no one will listen to us. The university has to listen to the demands of the students." Garcia said she was confident that the students would win a living wage. "Faith is the last thing you lose," she said, "and we have everything to gain."

Most of the students are confident as well, although they say they cannot be sure what the university administration will do.

"I'm willing to go as long as it takes," said hunger striker Liz O'Callahan. She has lost five pounds so far. She is helping to monitor the health of her fellow hunger strikers. Some, she said, have experienced headaches, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, and vision loss. Most prepared for the hunger strike, physically and mentally, beginning in January, first increasing their natural fat intake, eating more nuts and avocados, then more fruits and vegetables, and immediately prior to the strike, taking laxatives.

If the strike lasts until graduation in the first week in May, many students will boycott graduation. The president of the university, Cisneros said, teaches a class called "Ethics and Global Poverty," while the Vice President for Strategic Development teaches one called "Human Rights: Culture and Crisis." But, said Cisneros, "when it comes to them actually changing something, they don't want to do it."

While opponents of living wage proposals, at Georgetown as everywhere else, argue that wages should be "set by the market," Cisneros points out that "the market" changes its mind when you pass through a wall between two buildings on campus, one of them cleaned by workers earning $8.50 and the other cleaned by workers earning $12.50—a situation suggesting that wages are actually set by unionization and collective bargaining.

Hunger striker Elena Stewart is quickly losing weight and has become nauseous, dizzy, and frustrated, she said. "I view this as a mental and spiritual exercise in active resistance," she said. "I don't see this as passive at all. I try to translate physical pain into mental commitment."

Stewart is committed to hunger striking for two weeks. Beyond that, she will support her fellow students who continue, if the living wage has not yet been won.

MASS UNREST IN BOLIVIA: PEOPLE TAKE THE STREETS

President Under Attack Over Free-Market Ideals And Exploitation Of Resources

By Jo Tuckman from *The Guardian*

Scratching her swollen and shoeless feet after digging up her potato field, Roberta Cente Āno looks exhausted but says she has plenty of energy for the struggle ahead.

"We blocked roads before and we will do it again," says the Aymara Indian mother of 12. "It is the only way the government ever listens, they want to just think about the rich."

Sitting on the curb with his family, their feet in sewage, unemployed mechanic Estanislao Mamani says he, too, believes it is the right time to demand more. "We will paralyze the country when the order comes," he says.

Ms CenteĀno lives in a hamlet on Bolivia's vast highland plain, 4,000 metres (13,000ft) above sea level, which also houses the sprawling working-class city of El Alto.

From the potato fields to the slums, South America's poorest country is a political time bomb which, analysts say, could explode at any moment.

In recent weeks, a wave of street protests by indigenous and labour groups opposing the government's economic policies have almost crippled the country. Trade unions have called a 48-hour strike starting today.

Roadblocks of stones and tree trunks have cut off one region in the centre of the country for weeks, with long lines of trucks filled with rotting produce unable to move and reports of shortages in some towns. Meanwhile, the political leaders of Bolivia's poor, primarily indigenous majority are poised to extend the protests nationwide from tomorrow unless the government gives in to their demands.

Their central demand is 50 percent royalty payments on exports of Bolivia's natural gas, which are bought by foreign companies, most notably Petrobras in Brazil, Repsol in Spain and BP.

The government and the private sector say this would turn the country into a no-go area for foreign investment. "Fifty percent is like saying to foreign investors in so many words, don't come here," says Eduardo Bracamonte, head of the national exporters' association. "The image of Bolivia has seriously deteriorated already. The perception of the risk of doing business has gone up enormously and we all suffer because of that."

There are other tensions between the people and the government, ranging from pressure to kick out the French water company that is running the services in El Alto to the prices of bus tickets.

Today, human rights officials had been expected to bring together the major players to seek a compromise on the royalties issue, but plans for the meeting fell apart when the president, Carlos Mesa, decided not to attend.

Last week, the centrist President Mesa seemed to strengthen his chances of bringing the situation under control when his offer to resign was unanimously rejected by parliament. But pressure on the president from the middle and upper classes to crack down on the protests is growing, prompting rumours that he will declare a state of siege.

"This is the most serious crisis in Bolivia for 50 years," says Mr Garcia.

RACIAL PROFILING IN MEDICAL DIAGNOSIS

From *SF Bay View*

Though most people with a combination of mental health and substance abuse disorders have similar medical needs, the treatments initially offered African Americans and whites tend to differ, according to a study in the current issue of the *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and the Underserved*, published by Meharry Medical College.

African Americans in the study were more likely to receive treatment for drug abuse and whites were more likely to receive mental health services, according to the study, "Racial Distribution of Dual-Diagnosis Clients in Public Sector Mental Health and Drug Treatment Settings," conducted by Jennifer Alvidrez, Ph.D., and Barbara E. Havassy, Ph.D., of the University of California at San Francisco.

As a result, African Americans may not always get the mental health services they need, and whites may not get the drug treatment they need. In addition, the study found that African Americans were less likely than whites to receive mental health services that reduced the likelihood of future involuntary treatment.

"This study represents a serious deficiency in proper treatments for both African Americans and whites," says Virginia Brennan, Ph.D., editor of the Meharry journal. "Providing accurate mental health and substance-related diagnoses and treatments, unbiased by race, is an important part of being a health care provider. This research is an important step in understanding that this doesn't always happen and offers some clues about why."

Even though African Americans were over-represented in drug-treatment settings and under-represented in outpatient mental health settings, they were less likely than whites to receive either mental health or drug treatment services, the study also found.

The two-year study was conducted in San Francisco, where whites are the largest racial group in public mental health residential treatment settings (49 percent white, 25 percent Black and 26 percent other) and Blacks make up the largest racial group in residential drug treatment settings (55 % Black, 35 % white and 10 % other).

When a "dual diagnosis" was made and patients had both a mental health and a drug treatment need, the racial breakdown was equally skewed. The mental health sample was 56 percent white, 23 percent Black and 22 percent other races. The drug treatment sample was 36 percent white, 42 percent Black and 20 percent other races. That striking difference was seen even though similar percentages of Black and white patients were given a dual diagnosis. The study had 420 participants.

The study considers possible explanations for such racial differences. Blacks may initially enter drug treatment rather than mental health treatment because of a preference for viewing problems as drug-related, not psychiatric in nature, while whites may have opposite preferences overall. It is also possible that providers are more likely to attribute psychiatric symptoms in African Americans to drug use rather than mental disorders and to do the opposite with white patients.

The *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved* was first published in 1988 and is devoted to research on social issues affecting the poor and medically underserved. The journal's goal is to disseminate to health care practitioners, policy makers and community leaders information on health status and health care in low income and other medically underserved communities. The journal is published quarterly by Meharry Medical College.

Meharry Medical College (www.mmc.edu) is the nation's largest private, independent historically black institution dedicated solely to educating health science professionals. The college is particularly well known for its uniquely nurturing, highly effective educational programs; preeminence in health disparities research; culturally sensitive, evidence-based health services; and significant contribution to the diversity of the nation's health professions workforce. Black Issues in Higher Education's ranking of institutions annually lists Meharry as a leading national educator of African Americans with M.D. and D.D.S. degrees and Ph.D. degrees in the biomedical sciences.

TRAIL OF BLOOD LEADS FROM COLOMBIA TO U.S.

by Mary Turck, *From the Star Tribune (Minneapolis, MN)*

On Feb. 25, they found a trail of blood leading away from a farm. One hundred men and women from San José de Apartadó, Colombia, accompanied by international witnesses from Peace Brigades International, the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the Corporation for Judicial Liberty and Concern America, followed the trail to the first grave.

Two-year-old Santiago and his six-year-old sister, Natalia, were buried with their parents, Sandra Milena Muñoz-Rozo and Alfonso Bolivar Tuberquia-Graciano, and Alejandro Perez Cuiles. Later that day, they found more bodies in an open field. Eleven-year-old Deiner Guerra was there with his father, Luis Eduardo Guerra, and Luis' 17-year-old companion, Bellanira Areiza-Guzman.

According to Amerigo Incalcaterra, a UN human rights official at the scene, bodies in the graves had been hacked apart with machetes. At least one body, that of Luis Eduardo Guerra, showed signs of torture. The search stopped at the graves, but the story does not end there. In a deeper sense, the bloody trail leads to the United States.

The people of San José knew what to expect when they left their town to search for their neighbors. In 1997, led by the murdered Luis Eduardo Guerra, they had declared their town a "peace community," refusing entry and welcome to all of the armed factions in Colombia's bloody civil war.

Since 1997, more than 130 residents have been murdered. No one has been convicted for a single one of those murders.

Peace communities stand against both the Colombian Army and its paramilitary allies and the FARC guerrillas. (FARC is the Spanish acronym for the leftist Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia.) Peace communities forbid carrying weapons. They insist that no fighters from any side are welcome.

At times, members of peace communities have succeeded in turning back FARC or Army forces intent on violating their territory. At other times, armed men from the Army or the right-wing paramilitaries or the FARC have entered and killed.

Luis and Alfonso were friends. Alfonso was a leader in the nearby peace community of Mulatos. As a leader in Colombia's peace community movement, Luis had traveled to Madison, Wisconsin, and to Europe to raise awareness about peace communities. But Luis was not a politician or a human rights official. He was a farmer.

Luis and his family had left San José days earlier, walking seven hours to Luis' fields, to harvest cacao beans. On the way home, they were stopped by soldiers from the 17th Army Brigade and taken to Alfonso's nearby farm. Luis' half-brother, also part of the group, escaped and ran to San José to raise the alarm. A small group found blood and human remains at Alfonso's farm. They returned to San José to assemble the larger search party, which found the graves.

One might expect President Alvaro Uribe and other government officials to offer their profound apologies for the Army's actions and a promise of investigations and prosecutions. They neither apologized nor promised legal actions. Instead, on March 2, the Army occupied San José.

On March 9, President Uribe denounced the peace communities, saying that no community could bar the Army from entering.

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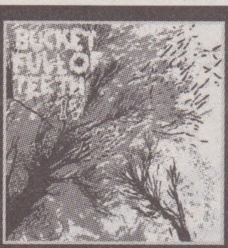

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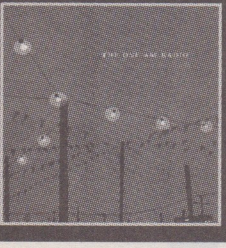

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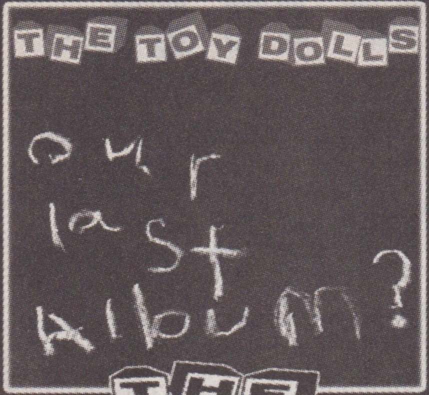

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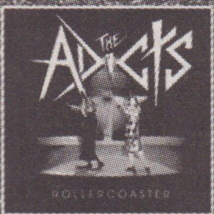

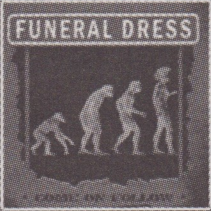

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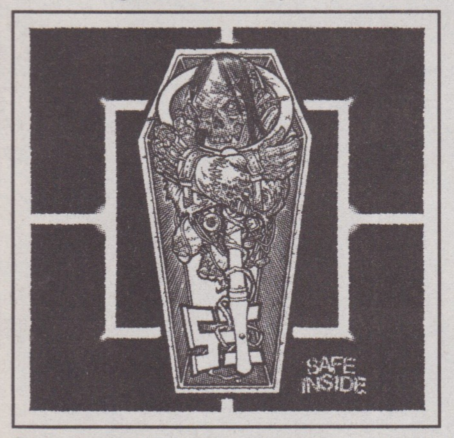

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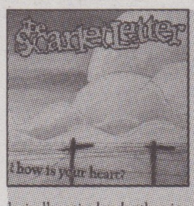

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TAIWAN PUNK ROCK?!

The Taiwan Punk Scene Report

The past twenty years have been a rocky road for bands in the Taiwan alternative music scene. The seeds of punk rock were planted in the 80s, but it wouldn't be until much later when an actual scene would emerge. During the post martial law days of the early 90s, independent Taiwanese rock was totally off the Mandarin-pop soaked mainstream's radar. The bands that would later become legends in the future punk scene were still in their infancy and would struggle for much of the decade to get the respect they deserved. These days, although many local bands still cite such Western pop-punk bands as GREEN DAY and BLINK 182 as important influences, they also declare their sheer reverence for LTK COMMUNE, LADYBUG and REPRODUCTION. *Who?* Here's a quick, abridged history of Taiwan punk and the bands that shaped today's burgeoning scene.

The History

Taiwan, known officially now as the Republic of China (ROC), is a small island nation across the Taiwan Strait from Fujian Province in Mainland China. The island is made up of several different races and tribes of people, including the aborigines, Holos, Hakka, and *Mainlanders*. The first Chinese immigrants to settle in Taiwan were the Holos and Hakka who came over from Fujian Province in the 17th century. In 1895, Japan colonized Taiwan and the Japanese would continue to rule until US forces drove them out at the end of World War II. This was followed by a wave of *Mainlanders* with the Kuomintang (Chinese Nationalist Party–KMT), fleeing the Communist takeover of Mainland China in 1949. The KMT, led by President Chiang Kai Shek ruled the island under a dictatorship for the next fifty years and spearheaded a campaign to suppress political opposition and local culture in an effort to make the Holo people assimilate to the minority rule.

Martial Law

During the martial law days of the 80s, the country's main connection to the outside music world was through the local English station ICRT (the former US Army base's Armed Services Radio), where you could always count on getting your AIR SUPPLY fix. In 1986, a group of young people fed up with commercial pop's hold on music listeners, founded the *Wax Club*, an organization dedicated to raise consciousness of alternative music. They soon

DAGISHIANG

bought the label Crystal Records and began importing alternative records from overseas. The group started playing these new indie imports in pubs and college campuses around Taipei. It was not long before local musicians and music enthusiasts would want to create their own music and in 1987 the *Taipei New Music Festival* was founded. The festival, although receiving very little media attention, continued for four years. One of the original performers, a young Wu Bai, would later become an international rock superstar in Asia. Another band to come out of the Taipei New Music Festival was DOUBLE X, who has been credited with releasing the first Taiwanese punk album entitled *Idiot Liar*. Another band, BLACKLIST, had their album banned by the government for its parody of the ROC national anthem. Unfortunately conservative audiences weren't ready for the abrasive and sometimes offensive lyrics of these punk rock bands and these groups quickly faded. However, as martial law was lifted in the late 80s, a new Taiwan would emerge, and with it, a new kind of music.

Post-Martial Law

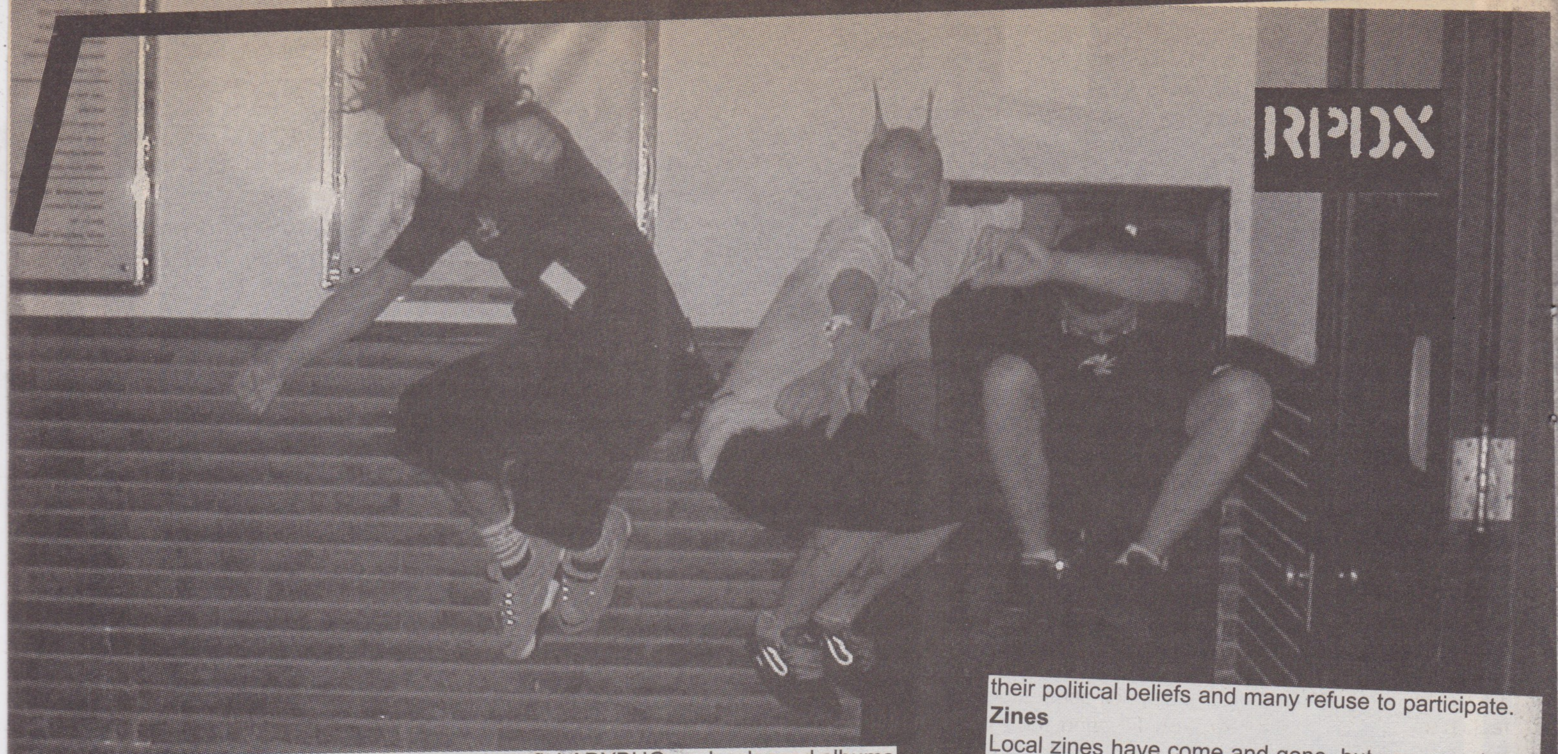
In the 90s a political movement known as the *Taiwanese localization movement* began to gain momentum. Supporters of the localization movement stated the belief that, contrary to the KMT's policy, Taiwan should be an independent nation and not a province of China. The localization movement put their emphasis on rewriting text books to present a more *Taiwanese prospective* of the nation's history and promoting the local languages of Taiwan, such as Holo, Hakka and the aboriginal dialects. (Speaking any of these languages had been forbidden in public schools during the martial law era.) A number of the bands that would emerge during this time would adopt this view in their music. The localization movement is the main platform of now-President Chen Shui Bian's Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), also known as the *Green Party*. The Greens would later play an important part in nurturing Taiwan's underground music scene.

LTK, known by their Holo name *Lô-chúi-khoe Kong-si?,* was founded in 1990 by two Taiwan University students, Tsai Hai-en and Ke Jen-chien (aka Shiao Ke). The band quickly became known for their offensive, violent, and pro-Taiwanese independence lyrics sung in the Holo dialect, as well as their unpredictable, provocative performances. Combining Western grunge and local genres of Taiwanese folk, the band's concerts frequently involved bizarre Chinese opera-inspired performance art skits coupled with wanton destruction. "I remember seeing LTK back in 1995 at an abandoned distillery in a Taipei suburb," recalls local American ex-pat John Cool. "There were about two or three hundred people in there and suddenly the band lit the stage on fire and threw this vile concoction of piss, shit and vomit at the crowd. It was wild." Well-circulated rumors even claimed the band dug up the ashes of their ancestors and made soup out if them. In a short time, LTK was banned from playing shows in the few downtown rock *live-houses* of Taipei. LTK Commune still exists today, but they've tamed down their performances and Shiao Ke is the last remaining original member.

During the mid 90s, a typical live show would attract about 30 or 40 people, but with such events as the annual *Spring Scream* music and arts festival gaining prominence, more and more Taiwanese youth began to become attracted to this new underground phenomenon. *Spring Scream* began in 1995 as a concert/jam on a grassy hill next to the southern resort town of Kenting. Resident American ex-pat organizers Jimmy Moe and Wade Davis invited bands from all over Taiwan and each group was allotted two sets during the two-day event. Most of the bands played a set of classic rock or grunge covers, but the festival grew and grew. The 2004 Spring Scream Festival hosted over 300 bands with acts from all over the world. Audience attendance was well over 30,000. Later that year, the annual Formoz Festival was founded by local bands and continues to flourish to this day. Formoz has hosted such acts as BIOHAZARD, MEGADETH, and YO LA TENGO and the Japanese punk/hc bands FC FIVE, BRAHMAN, SOBUT, THE VICKERS and ENVY. Also in 1995, *Pots*, "Taiwan's first weekly devoted to subcultures and alternative reporting," was founded.

The New Wave

The late 90s saw an explosion of new and creative rock bands. Bands such as the hard rock shock



group ANARCHY and the all girl pop punk outfit LADYBUG each released albums on indie labels, which sold incredibly well by local independent record market standards. Both bands were also the first Taiwanese rock groups to tour the United States. While in the US, LADYBUG befriended their long time indie rock idols, YO LA TENGO, and later brought the band to Taiwan to perform at the 2001 *Formoz Festival*. In 2000, ANARCHY's founder Anarchy Allen, founded the *Feirenbang*, or "Useless Mothefuckers". The *Feirenbang*, boasting up to 100 members at its peak, was a gang of punk rock obsessed local youths from the central Taiwan city of Taichung. The organization put on the first all punk rock shows in Taichung. During that time, bands such as ANARCHY, SALESMAN, NERVE BAND, and the influential melodic punk band REPRODUCTION would rock the walls off of packed pubs full of moshing teenagers. The concerts called *Stock Rock*, and later *Fei Parties*, were unruly, raucous events, a direct contrast to the Taiwanese tradition of sitting quietly, watching the bands perform and giving a hearty golf-clap at the end of the set. As the scene grew, the *Feirenbang* was even able to raise enough money to host such popular Hong Kong bands as the hardcore group KING LYCHEE and the rap-rock outfit LAMKEE. It was at these events where most of today's young, local punk bands were inspired to pick up their guitars. In 2003 the *Feirenbang* morphed into the Fei Records label and distro. With help from the Taiwan Rock Alliance (TRA), Fei released the local punk compilation *Fei Shiang Yang Guang Fei Shiang Ni* in 2003, and the Kaoshiung punk band FIRE EX's *Revolution* in 2004. Since 2003, Fei was allowed their own exclusive *punk stage* at the *Formoz* Festival. Fei continues to host punk parties on occasion and in March 2005, the label held the first ever *Hardcore Strike* tour with local hardcore bands *Skunk 420, Hindsight 20/20, Fall of this Corner, Vanish*, and Japan's *Endzweek*.

Also in 2000, Taiwan Rock Alliance, who had been sponsoring the annual *Formoz* festivals, held the first annual *Say Yes to Taiwan* music festival. With support from local pro-independence politicians, the festival's organizers established the festival to bolster a national Taiwanese identity among Taiwanese youths and to commemorate the *228 Incident* of 1947 when upwards of 10,000 native Taiwanese were massacred by the KMT government in an act to suppress political dissent.

Since its inception, the *228 Festival* has hosted such bands as Japan's SOFTBALL, AKIAKANE, FRENZAL RHOMB, the Singapore punk band OPPOSITION PARTY, KING LYCHEE, and even PUNK GODS from Mainland China. All of the bands that play at the festival are encouraged to express their support for Taiwan independence and organizers frequently deliver anti-Chinese and KMT rants while burning flags. After PUNK GODS performed at the 2004 *Say Yes to Taiwan*, the band was warned not to return to the Mainland and currently reside overseas seeking asylum status. The *Say Yes to Taiwan* concert is a controversial event for many bands in the underground music scene as it runs contrary to their political beliefs and many refuse to participate.

Zines

Local zines have come and gone, but you can always count on finding information about local bands and shows from *Pots* (http://en.pots.com.tw/) and the *Taipei Times* (http://www.taipeitimes.com)

Bands

Although there are at least 20 active punk and hardcore bands in Taiwan, their style typically ranges from poppy to melodic. There are very few bands that play anything resembling crust, grind, or even hardcore. Most bands are either influenced by Western or Japanese pop punk bands and the few hardcore bands in the scene are a little too emo to even slide into that genre. Nevertheless, many of these new bands have evolved over the past few years to create something that could only be described as uniquely "Taiwanese."

Taipei

CHILDREN SUCKER (anarchy_glsb@yahoo.com.tw, http://home.kimo.com.tw/marcus.gt.kb/), who regards Wu Bai and LTK as their mentors, is one of the hottest punk bands in Taipei. Their music is a mix of GREEN DAY style pop punk and local Taiwan rock. They even work in a dirty version of a Taiwanese folk song into their set. Mostly singing in Holo Taiwanese, the lyrics clearly represent the local *tai ke*, the betel nut chewing, working class man. Although some demos exist, the band is set to release a full-length studio album on Gamma Records in May. DA GI SHIANG (collegetown251@yahoo.com.tw, http://dagishion.fly.to/) is another one of Taipei's fine pop punk bands. They're music is very much in the BLINK 182 or YELLOWCARD vein, but the sound is catchy as hell and they've been packing the *live-houses* recently. DGS will be releasing their EP split on Leek Records in May. FALL OF THIS CORNER (anarchy_glsb@yahoo.com.tw) is an emo-core band who have an out of print CD and appear on a number of comps, but have unfortunately yet released a full length. HINDSIGHT 20/20 (anarchyallen@hotmail.com), lead by Anarchy's former frontman, Anarchy Allen, is a scremo band who have worked tirelessly to promote the scene in Taiwan. HOTPINK (getting_feedback@hotmail.com, http://wakeup.to/hotpink) is a grungy, girl punk band from Taipei with lots of cute, sing-a-long melodies.

THE DEPORTED (gotmahmojo@gmail.com, http://www.thedeported.com) is a fast, crusty, and occasionally melodic band based in Taipei with members from France, Canada, the US, and Taiwan. They're known around the scene for their adrenalin-fueled, confrontational performances and freaking the fuck out of local audiences. They're debut split EP with DA GI SHIANG and CONSIDER THE MEEK is due out in May. CONSIDER THE MEEK (considerthemeek@yahoo.com, http://www.leekrecords.com) from Taoyuan is a socially conscious, politically charged punk rock band in the spirit of PROPAGHANDI. They've released an EP and a full-length album on their own label, Leek Records, and they're set to release the split EP with DGS and THE DEPORTED this May, also on Leek Records.

Taichung

BB BOMB is a grrrl punk band and one of the new punk bands to have made it onto a Japanese label. After sneaking back stage at an AKIAKANE concert and handing the band their demo, they received a call from Einstein Records in Japan who offered to release their EP and bring them to Japan for a little tour. BB BOMB plays a sweet harmonic blend of Japanese style pop punk with a touch of BIKINI KILL attitude. SEMI-CON (http://140.128.99.6/~s901419/sindex.htm) is probably the most passionate, energetic band I have ever seen. Whether they're playing for a group of five people in a pub or to 1,000 at an outdoor music festival, they will never let up with their upbeat, bouncy brand of Taiwan punk rock. Always with a positive message in their songs, Shiao Ma and Jafy never fail to deliver an outstanding performance and will let a ray of sunshine into the darkest, dingiest of clubs. They've already independently released a four song EP and have another one on the way this spring. BROKEN FLOWER (fxxxfxxxfxxx@hotmail.com, http://bbbomb.24cc.cc/) plays a very Japanese influenced style of pop punk and has released one album on their own label Roc Steady Records.

Tainan

SM (http://smband.myweb.hinet.net/), "happy punks," is a group of young punkers that have been creating a little thriving scene in Tainan over the past year.

Kaoshiung

FIRE EX (firexsam@hotmail.com) plays an anthemic brand of punk rock and can always draw a big crowd no matter where they go. They have been featured on a number of international compilations and have toured Korea, Hong Kong and Mainland China. In 2003 SEMI-CON and FIRE EX became de-facto *punk rock diplomats* when the Mainland punk band REFLECTOR invited the two Taiwan bands over to Beijing for two shows.

Where to Play

Because the number of venues that will host rock 'n' roll bands in Taiwan is so limited, bands frequently have to be creative. From playing shows in front of temples to crowded vegetable markets, or even formal office parties, most bands will play anywhere, anytime and to anyone. For instance, SEMI-CON's first gig was in front of a group of old folks at a picnic celebrating the reconstruction of a small town police station that was devastated by the 9/21 earthquake. "All these old grandpas were clapping and bobbing their heads," recounts SEMI-CON's Shiao Ma, "Really weird." Because an old, archaic law from the martial law era is still on the books, resident foreign bands are forbidden to play shows without a special work permit. Since none of the local rock clubs have the official license to have performances, this leaves foreign bands to play shows at their own risk. Some clubs have even refused to host non-Asian foreign bands-Asian bands are ok-because the fine is huge. The resident ex-pat bands POINT 22 and THE DEPORTED recently took matters into their own hands and set up amps and a drum set in a canal. THE DEPORTED played one song before the several police cruisers arrived. No one was deported in the incident.

Today's scene can be separated into three parts: North Taiwan, Central Taiwan, and Southern Taiwan.

Taipei

The Northern capital of Taipei has the most active scene these days. The biggest rock club is The Wall (http://www.the-wall.com.tw), which in addition to a large area for seating and moshing, it also has a large lobby area with several indie record shops, including the tiny Fei Records storefront, which sells domestic and import punk CDs. The Underworld (underworld-taipei.blogspot.com/) is a dark, smoky little basement *live-house* and bar that has rock concerts four nights a week. The Riverside is a jazz bar located in the same area as the other two, but it also frequently has alternative acts come and perform. The Witch House is a funky, little, lesbian café, which only allows folk and acoustic acts to play. DV8 is a pub with a big basement and crappy sound system, but punk bands often put on free shows there to big crowds. Lounge 808 (www.apa-music.com.tw) and Player Studio have pretty good sound, but they've recently adopted the Japanese custom of charging a rental fee of the space for the night. There are also a number of pubs around Taipei, which, after some coercion, will occasionally allow the odd punk show. For touring info, contact AndyO (gotmahmojo@gmail.com) or Anarchy Allen (anarchyallen@hotmail.com).

Central Taiwan

In Central Taiwan, although it is not the punk mecca it was a few years ago, there is still one venue in Taichung called Nuno's Livehouse (http://www.nuno.idv.tw/house/su.htm). Nuno's has regular shows and frequently has foreign bands come and perform. The 89 K pub in Taichung also has concerts from time to time.

Southern Taiwan

The southern city of Tainan was once a Dutch colony and the capital of Taiwan. Although the southern cities have traditionally been more conservative, the Tainan punk band SM recently started a group called *Punk United* in an effort to create a better scene. Tainan is also home to Joehon of Saucebox Records (sauceboxrecords@hotmail.com), which distributes Look Out! and Side One Dummy records in Taiwan. Recently Saucebox has sponsored one punk show a month at various venues. There's a small *live-house* in Tainan called Room 335 and a rocker's pub called Dirty Roger's, which can be convinced to put on shows.

The largest city in the South is Kaoshiung. Although there are several active bands in Kaoshiung, there are very few places to play. Usually the shows are at outdoor venues.

Record Labels

Crystal was one of the pioneering alternative labels, but the first exclusively punk and hardcore labels didn't appear until a couple years ago. FEI Records (anarchyallen@hotmail.com, http://home.kimo.com.tw/fei_records/) is home to FIRE EX and distributes most local releases. The label also frequently organizes shows around the island. Leek Records (leekrecords@hotmail.com, http://www.leekrecords.com) is an activist, punk label founded by an Australian ex-pat. The label is affiliated with PETA and various anti-war organizations, and occasionally organizes actions. Leek is home to CONSIDER THE MEEK, THE DEPORTED, DA GI SHIANG, and the *Serious Leekage* compilation wit several local Taiwan bands, as well as foreign bands PROPAGHANDI, FRENZAL RHOMB, THE DWARVES, SAMIAM and many more. Taiwan Rock Alliance (TRA) (info@tramusic.com, http://www. anti-china.net) is the biggest promoter of alterative bands and festivals. TRA puts on the *Formoz, Autumn Tiger*, and *Say Yes to Taiwan* music festivals. White Wabbit Records (http://www.wwr.idv.tw/) is an indie rock label and distro that also helps to organize local concerts.

Festivals and Touring

Occasionally foreign bands come through Taiwan for a couple dates, but they generally fit the bill themselves or organizations like TRA pay for their plane tickets and accommodations. Touring foreign bands shouldn't expect to make a fortune from shows, but we can always guarantee you a crowd. Annual festivals are the best arenas to see foreign bands in Taiwan. Since most organizers rely on certain to channels to book foreign bands, most of the bands that have played Taiwan have been from America, Japan and Australia. The four largest alternative music festivals are the *Formoz, Autumn Tiger, Say Yes to Taiwan, Spring Scream*, and *Hohaiyan*. *Formoz* (info@tramusic.com, http://www.formoz.com/sino/index.html) is usually held between August and September. If you keep your eyes peeled you may be able to even catch a glimpse of President Chen Shui Bian, who helped provide the spot for the first *Formoz* back in 1995 (he's a big fan of the Japanese glam-rock band SEX MACHINE GUNS). *Autumn Tiger* (info@tramusic.com) is a new event held by TRA in October/November, but the 2004 *Autumn Tiger* show hosted the Japanese hardcore band FC FIVE and indie rockers MOGUAI. *Say Yes to Taiwan* (info@tramusic.com, http://www.sayyestotaiwan.org/) is also held the weekend around February 28. *Spring Scream* (wade@springscream.com, http://www.springscream.com) is a wild, five-day Woodstock-esque music and arts festival held annually the first week in April. March is always a tense time for local underground bands as they vie for choice time slots. *Hohaiyan* (http://www.hohaiyan.com/) is a government sponsored event held every summer on picturesque Fulong Beach. Past *Hohaiyan* festivals have featured ANDREW WK, JOHN SPENCER BLUES EXPLOSION, MACH PELICAN, THE DIRTY THREE, and the 5,6,7,8'S.

In Closing

Taiwan punk is a small intimate scene and although we sometimes function like an alcoholic, dysfunctional family, there is still a lot love and we've been overcoming petty differences to create a place where we all get together and fuck shit up. If you're a band planning on doing an Asian tour, don't overlook us! While we can't give you much money, we'll hook you up with shows, a floor to sleep on, a bowl of noodles and a couple nice tall boys of Taiwan Pijiu (soy milk for the xstraightedgersx). Cheeahz!

AndyO–gotmahmojo@gmail.com

ROCHESTER, NY

I have no idea why I am the one writing this report. Even though I have lived in Rochester, NY two times, I have always lived in western NY and have only gone to shows in Rochester. I have been living in Rochester for only the second time, and for about six months. Of all my years of going to shows in Rochester, it's the best I have ever seen it. Rochester has always been a punk town with strong punk roots. The hardcore punk bands that come from this area all have a distinctive sound. They all sound like they did their homework before starting a band. I am not going to dive into any kind of history lesson about Rochester, but maybe someday. For now, I am going to get you up to date as fast as possible. I am going to stay away from bands that are not currently playing. This scene report has one purpose and that's to inform the punks that, in my opinion, Rochester exists and has the best scene in NY. The only old band I am going to mention is 17TH CLASS. My label Punks Before Profits (PBP) put out a seven-inch and an LP by them. To me this band shaped a lot of what was to come in Rochester. I have seen this band play in front of nobody off and on for many years. They existed in a time period

where it seemed the scene was changing, new kids started coming up, and this was the band to influence them. 17TH CLASS played their last show about year and half ago in November 2003. This show seemed to be a turning point in Rochester punk. There were a few new bands that played this show and it started a new breed of kids to come. SPOONFUL OF VICODIN (nightstick_justice@yahoo.com, 38 Cassandra Court, Webster, NY 14580) was one of the bands that hopped on the show. They played power violence-grinding-thrashy stuff-short songs and a really short set. At the time, there were no bands playing this style of punk in Rochester. SKATE KORPSE, which featured Alex from 17TH CLASS, also played this show and has a record on my label. SKATE KORPSE moved to Buffalo, NY shortly thereafter and should still be considered a Rochester band-one of the few that plays great skate-punk. Quinn, the drummer of SK, used to be in a band called PLANNED OBSELENCE who sounded like early 80s so-cal punk. They had a short run and to my knowledge put nothing out. BLUDWULF appeared at this show with James the singer from a classic Rochester band THE END. BLUDWULF (bludwulf13@yahoo.com) plays awesome fucking metal with a punk spirit backing it up. They just did a record on Hardware Records from Germany. Contact them to get a copy. This band has been getting around so move fast if you want a copy as there were only 666 made. I have heard an LP is in the works so keep an eye out for it. If you like good metal, check them out. So, after the smoke cleared from the last 17TH CLASS show, bands started popping up all over the place.

FATALITY(www.flawlessvictory.bravehost.com, 385 Thornell Road, Pittsford, NY 14534) started off by playing a more REAGAN YOUTH sloppy style punk, but today sounds more like the offspring of CRYPTIC SLAUGHTER. They will be putting out a couple records in the future, one with SPOONFUL OF VICODIN, and one with HUMBRINES DUDES from Grand Rapids, MI. Both will be split seven-inches. SPOONFUL OF VICODEN has been the first of these new bands to hit the road and play some shows. Many Rochester bands don't play out of the area, but this band has, so keep your eyes open for them in your town sometime this summer. They have recorded a few times so contact them for their demo. DESTRUX (www.totaldestrux.cjb.net, Pipeline Way, Webster, NY 14580) has been playing for a year or so and also has a record out on PBP records that came out a few months back. They play old style hardcore punk, similar to NEON CHRIST. They will also be planning some short tours this spring so look out for them. SKATE FAST OR DIE (sfd.owns.you@gmail.com, www.myspace.com/skatefastanddie) is a very new band from the Rochester area and play rad punk rock like GANG GREEN or TEEN IDLES. They have a demo tape that rips and may have some records in the future. I OBJECT (rockwellrenaissance@hotmail.com, 537 Caroline Street, Rochester, NY 14620) is another semi local band that plays fast, pissed, old style hardcore punk and have been compared to bands like THE AVENGERS, SIN 34 and 7 SECONDS. Barb, the singer, and myself both live in Rochester while the other two do not. I OBJECT has two seven inches out, one S/T and one split with the band FOREVER YOUTH. We also have a two-year CD with 25 tracks in all. WARSQUAD is one of the longest running bands of the hardcore punk scene. I also play bass in this band. We play 80s so-cal style, hardcore punk that has been compared to THE ACCUSED, ADOLESCENTS and many other classic 80s bands. WARSQUAD has done a little bit of touring in the past three years and put out one seven-inch. A split seven-inch with CIRIL will be released sometime in the future, as well as a split LP with DESTRUX. HOW WE ARE (how_we_are@hotmail.com, 56 Marion Street, Rochester, NY 14610) is a new, hardcore punk that plays modern style hardcore with much melody. Definitely not as raw as above listed bands but still punk as fuck. They have a demo out and will be playing and touring more and more as time goes on. They have members of past Rochester bands like STANDFAST, XWITNESSX, and THE DISASTER. IDK (10 Pacer Drive, Henritta, NY, 14467, www.idk.cjb.net) is a new band from the area. They have not recorded anything yet, but maybe in the not so distant future. They play more of a street punk style but still definitely punk. ANOTHER ONE DOWN (lowerclasspunk2aol.com, 2522 Elton Road, Bloomfield, NY, 14469) is another band on the street punk side of things and used to go under the name THE DISMISSED who did record a very good demo. BAD BUSINESS (danbress@danbress.com) was once a

Rochester band but almost all the members have moved out of the area. In my opinion they are one of the best bands to come out of Rochester. I can't compare this band to anybody...just catchy, awesome, hardcore punk. TEENAGE JUNKIES (537 Caroline Street, Rochester, NY, 14620) is Rochester's very own GERMS. I know you are thinking it can't be true, but really it is. I don't think they have recorded anything but still have played countless shows and continue to do so. The best way to hear this band is see them live. UV RAYS(867 Bridle Lane, Webster, NY, 14580, uvkpunk@yahoo.com) also carry on that late 70s punk vibe. This band has Kevin, the singer of WARSQUAD, but this time it's a little different. Kevin's vocals are still very punk but just in a different way. UV RAYS will have some records out soon and have a lot of stuff recorded so check below for contact info. KHAOTIK DISORDER (gravebomb@Rochester.rr.com, 725 Filkins Road Apt C, Newark, NY, 14513) takes us to another level of punk. This is a brand new band that just recorded a demo that you can get through their contact info. They play raw, punk hardcore that is very simple and very original sounding. Everything about this band sounds like it came from the 80s and not from the U.S. FINISHER (www.myspace.com/finisher, www.finisher.cjb.net) is a new band that again is taking us to another level, but this time it's classic metal. These guys just recorded a demo that sounds like all the classics-GRIM REAPER, IRON MAIDEN-but done by very young kids that can play their gear. MISSLE CRISIS (23 Wheeldon Drive, Rochester, NY, 14616) is one of the newest additions to the Rochester family. They just played a first show not very long ago and it ripped. They play classic crossover-thrash with a lot old style punk tossed in. I would expect to see a demo from this band in the near future. THE EMERSONS (537 Caroline Street, Rochester, NY, 14620) are one of the area's longest running punk bands. I am not sure how long but I can tell you longer than any other band mentioned above. They have tons of recordings, but no official releases. They play that classic pop punk sound and have been compared to SCREECHING WEASEL, THE QUEERS, and THE RAMONES. If you dig that straightforward, pop punk sound than check this out. A new band that is scheduled to play their first show next month is NO WHEY (rockwellrenaissance@hotmail.com, 537 Caroline Street, Rochester, NY, 14620), which is Barb's (I OBJECT!) new acoustic project with another local kid named John playing guitars and singing. I think after this Rochester officially covers all genres. Like I said this is my Rochester scene report of some bands I have knowledge about. This is just so you know how great this city is. New bands seem to pop up every week so look out for another Rochester scene report with a ton of more rad bands.

Places To Go And Things To Do

So what do the Rochester punk rockers do? For eating, I'll review the vegi-friendly places since a lot of punks seem to be vegetarian/vegan. The ATOMIC EGGPLANT on Marshall Street, right off Monroe, has good vegan food and lots of choices. If you spend four to eight dollars you'll get stuffed. Across the street you will find the co-op grocery store that also has good food. They make food and have good groceries to buy. Also, there is INDIAN HOUSE vegi-buffet. Eight bucks for all you can eat Indian food and it rules. If you are looking to get really stuffed check this out. It's the shit! This is on the corner of South Clinton and Caroline Street. Rochester has tons and tons of Indian style buffets if that's your thing, so just look around. SKIPPYS is a vegan place, similar to the EGGPLANT, and is located on South Avenue. The food at this place is great. As all punks love pizza, Rochester has a lot of pizza places. Just look around because there are too many to mention. MR SHOES on South Avenue has a daily special of 6 dollars for 12 slices. MARK'S PIZZA, on Monroe Avenue, is 2 dollars for a huge slice and is open very late every night.

Other then restaraunts, record stores and movie places are two other places to check out. HOUSE OF GUITARS, 645 Tidas Avenue, is filled with gear, records, t-shirts, posters, and all sorts of shit. THE LITTLE is a theater on East Avenue that shows all the indie films. THE CINEMA double feature is every night-three bucks for two movies. Great little theater on the corner of South Clinton and Goodman Street, the popcorn is cheap and vegan friendly. RECORD ARCHIVE, located at 1394 Mt. Hope Avenue, is a cool record store with tons of records so just go and dig around and you

may find something rad. HELL ON EARTH off Alexander Street, near Monroe, is a small punk and hardcore record store where you can find some great shit at sometimes. Above that you will find the local tattoo shop called LOVE HATE TATTOO which is highly recommended.

Distros and other misc. stuff

We have a few record distros in the area and, and the biggest, www.angrypunk.com, is run by Joe from WARSQUAD. He is planning on doing some records on a new label in the future and carries a lot of classic records and t-shirts. Punks Before Profits is a label and distro I run. Check out www.punksbeforeprofits.com or write: 537 Caroline Street, Rochester, NY, 14620. Bee.El.Vee.Dee Records is a new label done by Barb from I OBJECT, who helped me with Punks Before Profits for years. She has branched off and is getting into bootlegs, is doing a few co-releases with PBP, and does a non-music related distro of things like vegan soap, a zine, and a "How to Screen-printing Video." Indignant Noize is a small distro that is not from Rochester but is close by and you will see at some shows. They can be reached at Eastgate Apts. 11b 150 Harriet Street, Elmira, NY, 14901. For stickers, t-shirts, buttons, and other shit your band might need, check out www.htbkick-sass.com. Life Over Death is another t-shirt place in Rochester that has just started-great dude and dependable: punkrocktshirtguy@yahoo.com. The final site to mention is www.Rochesterpunk.net that is updated by Joe from WARSQUAD, and he does a great job. Just check that out for all the Rochester punk news you need. I have a feeling the next scene report will have new labels and distros so keep an eye out.

Bands and Contacts

I am sorry to anybody who does not use email; I tried to get as many snail-mail addresses as possible. If you really want to get any of them a letter mail it to the Punks Before Profits address and I'll ensure the delivery.

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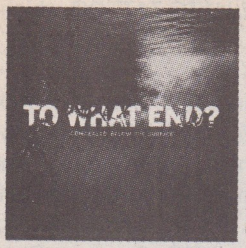

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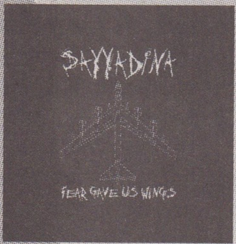

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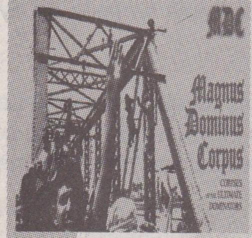

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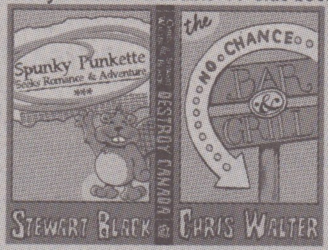

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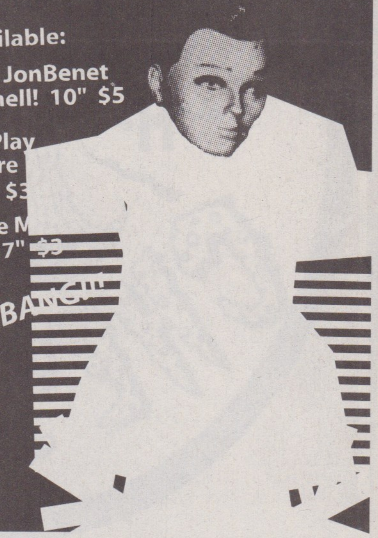

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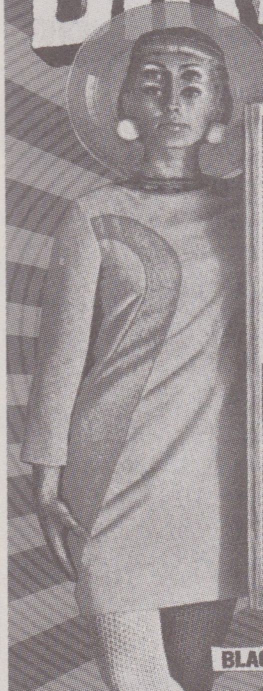

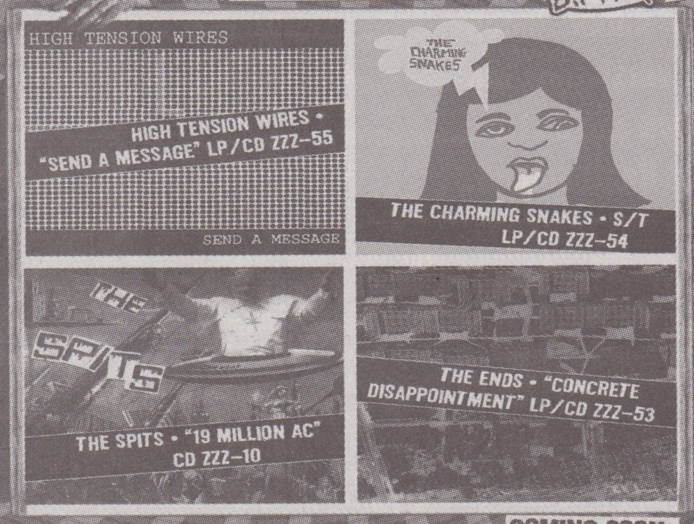

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HAVE

I first saw Have Heart open a show at AS220 in Providence in late 2003. They were a relatively new band then, but the amount of energy and sincerity they conveyed during their set was incredible, proving themselves more than worthy of sharing a bill with Modern Life is War and Verse at one of the best venues currently in New England. I spoke with Pat, who immediately struck me as one of the nicest and chillest dudes I'd ever met, and went home with what would become one of my favorite demos. Violence and pessimism at shows and elsewhere are a fact of life, but for lots of kids here in New England, Have Heart is a great antidote.

Since that show, they've had a few minor lineup changes, put out a 7" and a vinyl version of the demo, done a few East Coast trips and one US tour, and attracted a lot of attention. Have Heart embodies the best possible connotations of what honesty, open minds, constructive attitudes, and a genuine sense of fun can bring to music. And they manage to do that while still expressing the anger and frustration that made them turn to hardcore in the first place. If you appreciate a band with a tight, intense live set and a fun and friendly pit to go with it, you simply cannot miss with these dudes.

INTERVIEW BY MARY SOUTHWORTH

MRR: OK, so who's in the band, what do you each play, and where are you from?
BRIGGS: I'm Briggs, I play bass. I'm from Rochester, Mass. And, uh, I'm single. [Laughter].
BEN: My name is Benjamin Kelly. I play guitar, and I'm from Cape Cod, Mass.
PAT: I'm from Mashpee, Mass.
Justin: Justin, I play drums. I'm from Wareham, Mass.
RYAN: Ryan, play guitar.
BRIGGS: We don't really do interviews that often.
PAT: We're not fast thinkers.
MRR: There seems to be quite a few bands coming out of this little bunch of towns on the southern border of Mass lately. Is it something in the New Bedford area water supply?
PAT: There was a place in New Bedford, Reflections, which was good scene-wise; there were a lot of shows there for a while.
BRIGGS: I find a lot of bands from around here just kinda have the same people in them, and whatever ones are the best, kind of, stick. I've been in probably six bands in one year, and at one time we probably all even played the same show.
MRR:: How did Have Heart get together?
PAT: Ryan and I were in another band, which was kind of like too technical, not like what I totally wanted to play. Justin was the drummer, Briggs was the bass player. This kid Eric was also in the band with us, which worked out for a while, then in like the summer of 2002 we just kind of went our separate ways.
JUSTIN: Things with our original guitarist didn't work out.
Briggs: He left. He was also 16, no, he was 14. But he left. Ryan came, we played, then

HEART

Eric left due to his other band, then Ben came, after a rather long stretch of having one guitarist and multiple fill-ins.

MRR: What sort of expectations of you as a band do you find people have? In general or as a straight edge band?

BRIGGS: I think people would just like us to be playing a little more.

PAT: I don't think people have any issues with us; we don't tend to have disagreements with anyone.

BEN: Only internal fighting.

BRIGGS: No one seems to have any expectations. People just sort of let us be.

MRR: Let's talk about your lyrics. They seem to be personal but in an outward way that everyone can relate to. They also convey a sense of personal struggle, but manage to avoid being negative. By whom and how are they written and what are your thoughts about lyrics?

PAT: I write them. I just write really what gets me going, I guess. I write about stuff I can get really into when we're playing. Just my thoughts, whatever I think of. It's good to write what people can relate to, but you don't wanna write just what you think people wanna hear. If people wanna hear it, too, I don't really care, I just write it anyway. I don't know, what do you guys think?

BRIGGS: Whatever sells. [Laughter].

BEN: Yeah, we're not the singer.

MRR: You have a 7" out on Thinkfast, What Counts. How did you hook up with the label?

BRIGGS: They pretty much heard the demo, came to us and offered, asked us to be on the label.

PAT: We also a have a 7" of the demo, Jeff from Start Today fanzine put that out on Bottled Up Records. It's just the four demo songs.

MRR: What are your thoughts on labels in hardcore, specifically the "business" aspects of making and selling records and touring?

RYAN: That's not what HC is about.

BEN: Oh, they can't see my thumbs down?

PAT: I think it sucks sometimes, because labels get too big and it's it more important what label you're on than what kind of band or people you are.

BRIGGS: I think it's funny when bands break up and labels try to get them back together or find tricky ways to sell their merch after the band breaks up. It's kind of slimy.

JUSTIN: Kinda trashy.

BEN: Kinda artsy.

BRIGGS: It's not art, at all.

PAT: Also another shitty thing with labels: Labels in my opinion are just there to put the records out, they're not there to… They seem to work like the tables you'd go to at lunch in high school, it's like the cool table you're gonna go to, and that sucks. [Laughter]. It's like am I gonna go to the Bridge 9 table today, will they accept me or will the, uh, Trustkill table?

MRR: The Internet in hardcore: pro or con?

PAT: Ah, message boards…

ALL: Message boards suck.

PAT: …really suck. It seems like the Internet can help a band, like, let people know about yourself, but it also brings out the shitty aspects of hardcore. And it can bring people together and divide people at the same time. I think also loads of miscommunication can be sent back and forth.

RYAN: Yeah, you can't detect sarcasm or emotion on the Internet and that hurts a lot of people.

JUSTIN: Yeah, we're always talking about how on message boards and stuff, kids are so quick to say something sucks, they're so quick to judge on the Internet or are just going along with everyone else on what sucks or what doesn't, depending on others' responses.

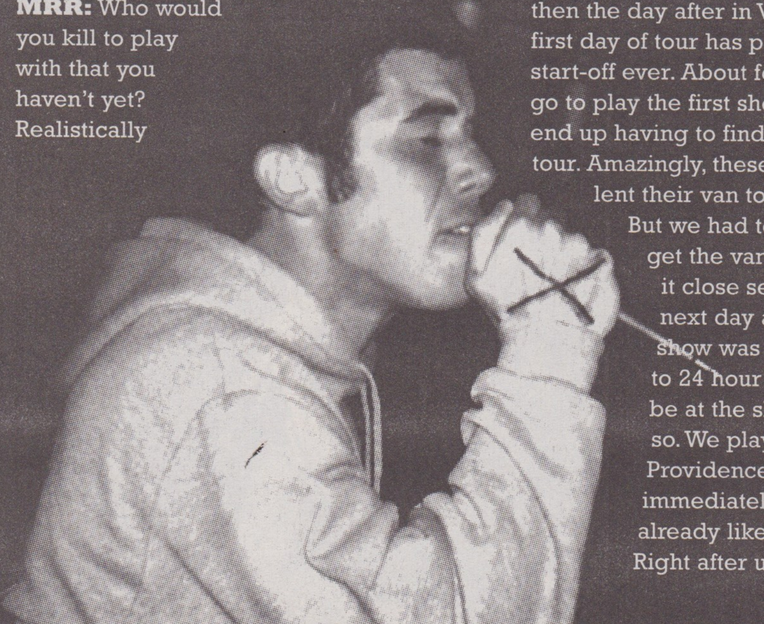
MRR: Knowing that your lyrics are not outwardly political and you do not position yourselves as "that kind" of band, do you have any thoughts to share on the situation in Iraq, the election, or anything else?

JUSTIN: I think personally the war and the situation now are fucking stupid. That's pretty much it; I think that goes for pretty much everybody.

PAT: I'm not as educated on the war as I'd like to be, but like all of us I think the presi-

HAVE HEART

dent's pretty arrogant, I think by far the worst president I'll ever see in my entire life. He's arrogant, not what a president should be.
BRIGGS: I'd rather listen to that Verse song "Searching" on the new LP on Rivalry Records.
MRR: What do you all do for day jobs?
JUSTIN: [Laughing] Funny story, I had this really hard labor job that paid like ten bucks an hour. I hated it, I did it like a month and a half and I quit. Two hours later, I went out to lunch with my friend at Wendy's and saw a girl get fired, and then I got the job at Wendy's for the two weeks until we went on tour, then quit.
BRIGGS: When you went in on your first day, you could have said, "I'm giving my two week's notice."
PAT: Me and Ryan work together at a golf club, we're groundskeepers.
BEN: I work at Jiffy Lube as a technician.
BRIGGS: I make human body parts out of titanium steel for humans.
BEN: He really does.
BRIGGS: I work every day, I will not go on tour, I make a load of money and it goes to random things, and I only get to spend only about 50 dollars a week on my life and food and bills.
BEN: We are a real hard-working band.
BRIGGS: I'm tired.
MRR: Who are your favorite bands to play with and why?
ALL: Verse.
PAT: Verse, Guns Up!
BRIGGS: I like Through Words, Look Alive,
JUSTIN: It's also fun to play with bands from other coasts and stuff like that, like Desperate Measures. Also Mental.
PAT: Primarily Verse. They're good friends of ours, they're very supportive, and they always look out for us.
MRR: Who would you kill to play with that you haven't yet? Realistically or not.
BRIGGS: That we haven't played with yet? I would have to say Yes. [Laughter]. That's my non-realistic answer. They're my favorite. They play on revolving stages.
BEN: Carnivore.
BRIGGS: Ooh! Make sure you put that "Ooh."
BEN: Or Pantera or Superjoint Ritual.
RYAN: Stop and Think.
JUSTIN: Um, I would love to play with, uh, one realistic one is maybe, uh, Jaguarz.
BRIGGS: Wait a minute, who?
JUSTIN: SOS.
BRIGGS: Ha ha, we have played with them. We went on tour with them…[Laughter].
PAT: Realistically, Champion, I emulate that band.
BEN: Uh I'd have to say Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, ha ha, I'm kidding, I dunno probably…
JUSTIN: I'm a big Bane fan so I'll just say Bane. You know, I actually I don't know.
RYAN: I'd have to say the Cro Mags.
PAT: I would love to play with Modern Life is War, uh, again. Well, we have, but it's a long story.
MRR: We've got time.
PAT: Ok, so MLIW is my favorite current hardcore band. To me, they just do everything right. It's rare these days to find bands with such inspiring lyrics and passionate lyrics combined, but not just combined, but matched. Everything goes hand in hand with this band, including their live performance. I was blown away the first time I ever saw them and heard them at Posi-Numbers 2003. So when my band got the chance not to just play a show with them, but do a couple dates on tour with them, I was weak at the knees.
So, the first day of tour we played with them in Providence, not to play again with them about a week later in Maryland, and then the day after in Virginia Beach. The first day of tour has possibly the worst start-off ever. About four hours before we go to play the first show in Providence, we end up having to find another vehicle for tour. Amazingly, these kids from Maryland lent their van to us, total strangers. But we had to stop in Maryland to get the van, and we were cutting it close seeing as how the very next day after the Providence show was in Atlanta, about a 20 to 24 hour drive, and we had to be at the show around seven or so. We play our set in Providence and have to leave immediately cause it was already like 9:30.
Right after us is MLIW. I saw



HAVE HEART

Jeffery Eaton, the singer and requested them to play "Destination: Death or Better Days," my favorite song, but just so happened that that wasn't in the lineup order of songs for them, so instead they opened with my second favorite song, "First and Ellen." They opened and for three minutes I was in heaven and worry-free about all the tour complications. We head out, and I realize that I left about 40 demos in the venue, so we had to go back, and as I was getting in there they said "This one's 'Destination: Death or Better Days.'" I was happy to see them at all, but I still missed almost all of the set.

So tour continues. After a couple car accidents and shot-out windows, we started to have brake problems. But everything was fine 'cause it was time for the Maryland show with MLIW. The set was amazing, and it was even more amazing that the next day I would get to do it again. So anyway, we're driving through the night to VA beach and one of the dudes falls asleep, bringing us stuck in the mud and another situation that can't be good for the well-being of the van. I fell asleep 'cause I was up all night and the previous night, so keeping the driver up was hard. We arrive in Virginia Beach and I can't fall asleep 'cause my cycle is so messed up. We play our set, which was bad 'cause I was at zero rest, and then we get a call saying that the van completely lost its brakes not far from the venue. So I go down to get them and sleep in the van on the 10-minute drive back to the venue. I'm awoken by my friend who told me that MLIW just played and I missed their set. No one woke me up. It sucked.

I've played with them so many times and seen them only once!! Plus I think on tour this winter they played every area we played, but at different times. Sucks.

MRR: How often do you play shows outside of Massachusetts and Rhode Island?

BRIGGS: I think we've been on the road a lot

PAT: Relatively a lot.

BRIGGS: More than half of our shows in the past year, I'd say a third have been outside of Mass. We've played 58 shows in a year when we first started playing shows.

PAT: I'd say more than a third.

BRIGGS: We went down the East Coast in like three days on an average… I'm so tired.

MRR: What is the farthest and longest tour you've been on so far?

PAT: The west coast. We just finished a US tour with Verse and Guns Up!, which began with Youth Attack on a few dates in the beginning.

MRR: How come you stopped doing the Verbal Assault cover for a while?

BRIGGS: I want to, I actually said something.

JUSTIN: We hadn't practiced it.

Briggs: Look for it, we will keep doing it in the near future.

PAT: I think a lot of people want us to keep playing it.

MRR: Anything else you'd like to add?

JUSTIN: Check out our other bands: Look Alive and Through Words.

BRIGGS: They're bodacious jams.

PAT: We don't wanna be plugging our own bands!

JUSTIN: OK, then check out Verse, Attitude, Shoot to Kill… Look Alive, Through Words [Laughter].

RYAN: Guns Up!

JUSTIN: Yeah, Guns Up!, Youth Attack, Hammer Brothers.

PAT: Also, we definitely thank Sean Murphy from Verse; he helps us out so much. And Larry from Thinkfast, Jeff from Start Today, and everyone who comes to our shows and supports us.

BEN: The New Bedford area HC scene that doesn't exist anymore.

BRIGGS: A big fuck you to Cape Cod. Cape Cod sucks.

BEN: But not Mashpee.

SINCE THE TIME OF THIS INTERVIEW, HAVE HEART FINISHED A VERY SUCCESSFUL US WINTER TOUR WITH VERSE, GUNS UP!! AND, ON THE EAST COAST, YOUTH ATTACK. SWEET TIMES WERE HAD BY ALL.

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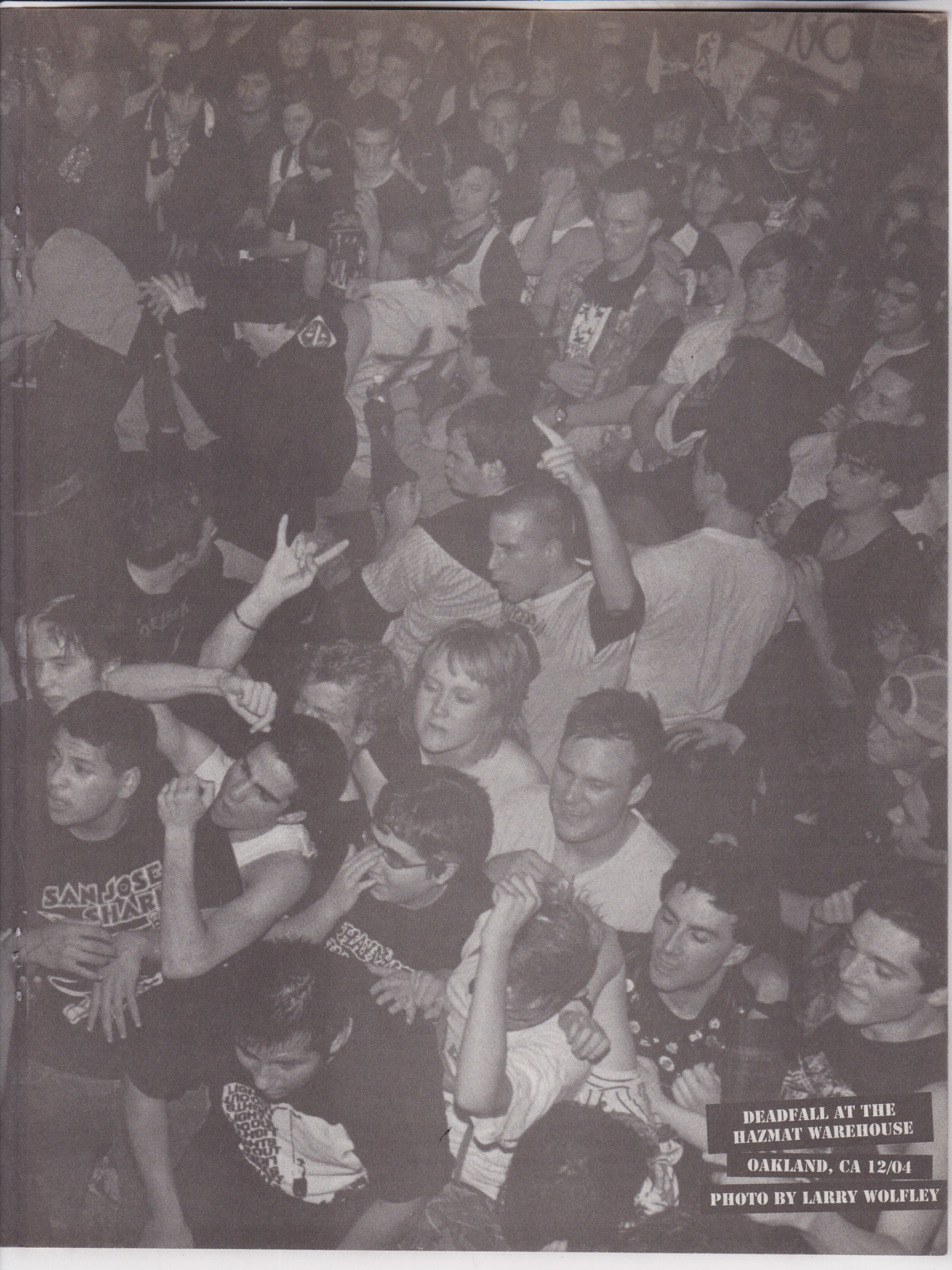

DEADFALL AT THE HAZMAT WAREHOUSE

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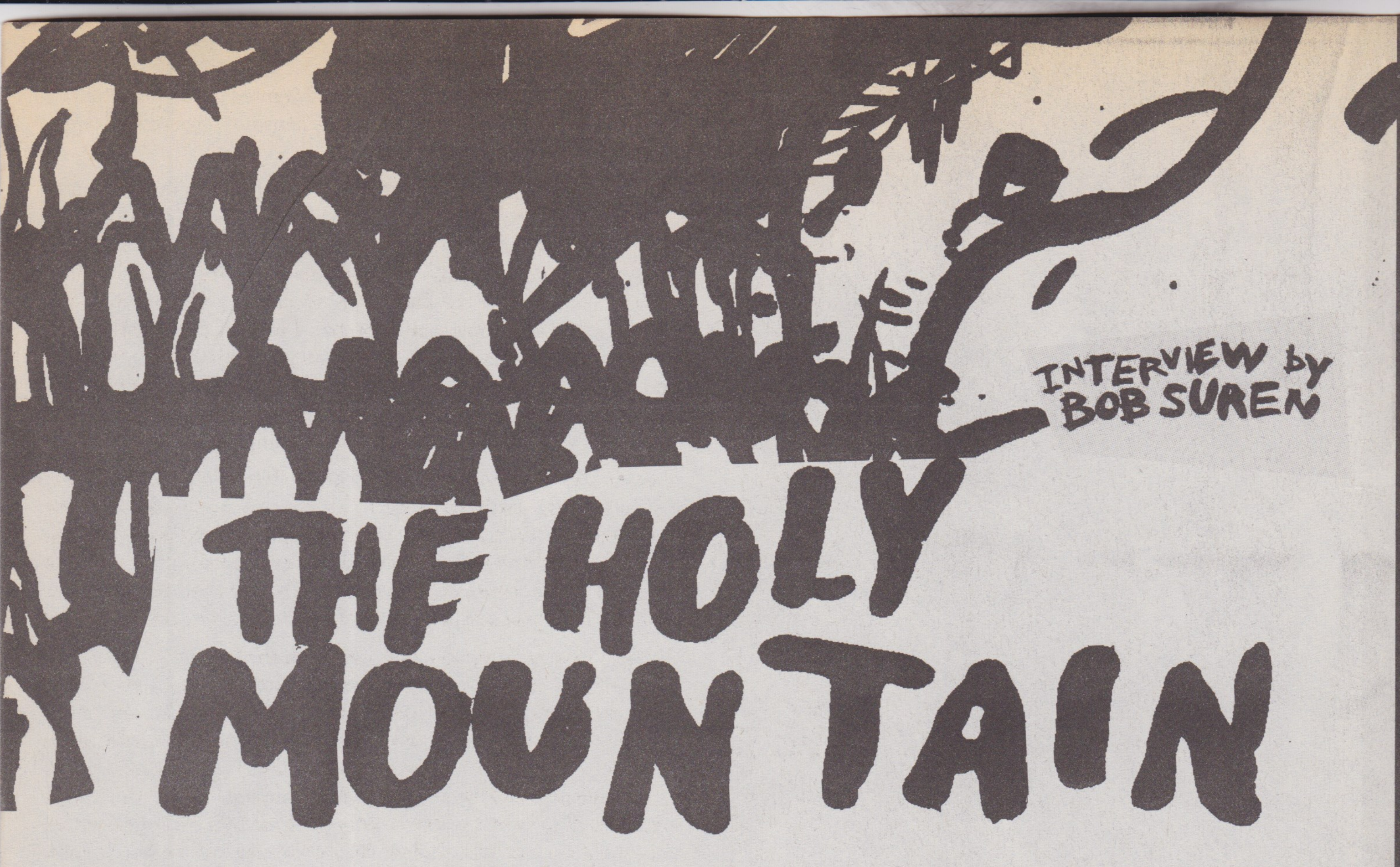


MRR: Background shit first. Who is in the band and what do you play?

Dan Shook: As of February, the band is Tyler on guitar, Evan on guitar and vocals, Greg on drums, and Dan on vocals and bass. Emily will play bass in the near future, and I will just be doing vocals.

What kind of name is The Holy Mountain? I understand that the name was taken from a film. Please explain what the film is about and how it relates to your band.

Dan: Hopefully, a name that doesn't immediately tell you what the band sounds like. The Holy Mountain was a movie made by Chilean-born director Alejandro Jodorowsky and released in 1973. It's a difficult film to describe; the narrative is loose, at best—something about an alchemist making a journey to the Holy Mountain seeking eternal life. The majority of people tend to enjoy just watching the steady stream of jaw-dropping images that continue throughout the movie. It remains a unique and ambitious project that would never be made today.

As far as it relates to the band, after a few months of practicing, we had to call the band something. I had written lyrics for a song that later ended up on the first 7" called "The Living Dead and the Holy Mountain," and we took it out of there. The song was about some shit or something, but it had nothing to do with the movie, outside of the title. It seemed like a vague, nondescript name that wouldn't throw us into any particular category. It also had nothing to do with the Sleep record, although many people have asked us about that.

Where, when and how did you get into hardcore/punk? What was it that initially drew you to it?

Tyler Alexander: I first heard The Sex Pistols, Black Flag, and The Dead Kennedys when I was 14 or 15 years old. Bands were just coming out at the time that MTV called "punk," like Green Day and the Offspring, but they sounded nothing like those bands, who sounded pissed and threatening. I guess I liked that.

Evan Dawson: I grew up listening to death metal bands like Dismember, Carcass, and Benediction, because my friend's older brother did and we thought he was awesome. Death metal was cool because it was fast and I knew my parents would disapprove. I was retarded for death metal until about 8th grade.

Until then, I was very dogmatic about music. I remember starting to skateboard and meeting other dudes that skated who were, more or less, punks. They made me tapes of things like Minor Threat, Black Flag, and the FUs. After listening to those tapes, I was sold on punk. It made more sense to me and I felt it to be a lot more personal and inclusive and not eviscerating corpses. It was about anger, and at that age that's all I knew. I hated school, I hated my peers, and most of all I hated me! Punk and hardcore made my anger tangible and with that I realized I wasn't alone in the way I felt. It also didn't hurt that it totally ripped!

Greg: I started getting into punk when I was 12 years old, mostly from my friend, Kevin's, influence. I had just gotten my drum kit for my 11th birthday and he played guitar, so we would just jam all day. Op Ivy, Green Day, Rancid, and Screeching Weasel covers, you know: the punk rock starter kit. He took me to my first show which was AAA and the Vandals, and that was it. I think the community feel was what really drew me in. And when you're 12 years old you're pissed about a lot of things going on in the world. Punk was a constructive and positive way for me to be heard.

Dan: My mom got me a subscription to Thrasher when I started skateboarding, around '87 sometime, and that's how I first heard about punk. They had interviews with Bad Brains, Final Conflict, and other stuff that was more underground at the time like White Zombie and Ministry. Pushead was writing a music column then and that's where I first heard about Sick Of It All, SSD, Gauze, Gism, and those bands,

even though I wasn't at an age where I could get records, really. To a kid that was 10 years old, even just the ads in the back of the magazine selling band shirts were indicators of what was cool. So, when I was 12, a friend's older brother let me borrow a cassette of the first Suicidal Tendencies record. A couple years later I bought the Misfits Collection 1 and the Bad Brains live record, and that was how it started.

At what point did you decide to become an active participants in punk and not just dudes going to shows and buying records?

Dan: We were 14 and 15, and really getting into punk and death metal (because Tampa was big for that in the early 90s), starting to go to bigger shows like 7 Seconds and Napalm Death, and then going to smaller shows as well like Assuck and Rorschach. The death metal underground was really strong then There were a lot of zines and bands selling demos for five dollars. A a couple of us got the idea to do our own zine because nobody seemed to be covering both punk and death metal. So we did.

The zine went on for about three issues, but cemented the whole underground music culture into my teenage life. The first idea to do a band came about when my friend Chris, who I did the zine with, and I were sitting outside a show one night talking to Steve from Assuck. We were talking shit about how we wished there were more local bands or something, and he said, "Why don't you stop buying so many records, save your money, buy some amps, and make your own band?" Slowly, we put something together that later became Combatwoundedveteran, and we made Steve record us because we told him it was his fault that we started the band.

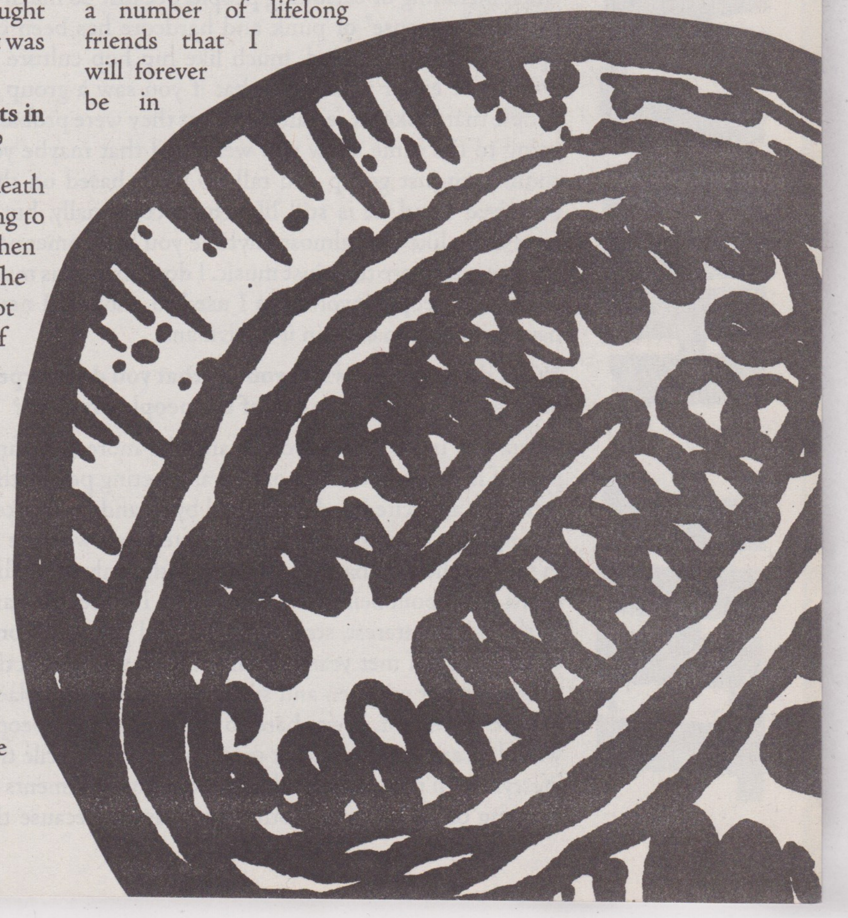
Tyler: As soon as I heard punk music I wanted to play punk music. I bought a guitar and started taking lessons not long after I bought my first punk cassette tape.

Evan: I got involved because I felt a strong sense of obligation to give back to the one thing that gave me so much. Being actively involved is the only thing that makes sense to me. You really only get out of it what you put in. In addition to playing in bands I write a zine called Hellfire for Fucker, go to shows, and make tons and tons of tapes for people, punks or not. I mean, I'm not applauding myself for my efforts, I just do these things to help express my views and share with others my love for punk and hardcore. I think a lot of people discover new views and music by reading zines and tape trading. The way I look at it, I'm just pitching in.

People who are not involved in punk/hardcore often ask me, "What is this stuff all about?" To me, punk rock is all about communication, but it is so hard to explain to an "outsider," for lack of a better word. How would you explain what it's all about to a very normal, mainstream person? Do you see punk/hardcore as more than just a type of music? Can it be called a subculture?

Greg: Equality! Respect! It seems like in the world of punk there's a basic code of ethics that for some reason a lot of kids my age can't understand. Simply stated: come as you are. Its not about your sex or race or age, if you're into dudes or chicks, where you're from, where you're going, what kind of shoes you're wearing, how much money you have, what side your hair is parted on, which ball team you like, boxers or briefs, or any of that bullshit. Don't get me wrong; punks can be assholes like anyone else, but, generally, punk is a subculture based on mutual respect. And that's an idea, I'm glad to be a part of.

Evan: I can only speak on my own behalf, but I agree with you. Communication is the most important aspect of punk and hardcore, hands down. I also think it's about community and support. We learn a lot from each other, and we make a lot of mistakes, but through punk and hardcore I have made a number of lifelong friends that I will forever be in



debt to for their unconditional support. With all these positive attributes come some negatives. Like everything else, at times acceptance in any scene or group of friends can be nothing short of cutthroat. Through my years of involvement, I have seen people come and go, but the one thing that remains the same is people making fun of each other, fighting, gossiping, fabricating rumors, establish kissing circles. And the thing I can best equate this to is everything I hated about high school. I'm not saying I'm not guilty of doing any of these things, I just think if people are involved in anything that is intended to unite people, it has infinite potential to go straight down the toilet and create barriers.

Look at religion, for example. You know how people are. Despite the few dog-shitty aspects, punk/hardcore is the best thing to happen to some people, myself included. I am among people that understand me and I feel I am involved in something I understand.

Tyler: Punk is a subculture in that it has its own code of conduct, rituals, vernacular, etc. Every subculture and musical style is about communication. I think what sets punk apart is that it is communicating a contemptuous and often hostile message towards mainstream society. That's one thing that sets it apart from other groups and genres, and it's the first thing you should explain to an "outsider" if you really want them to understand what punk is.

Dan: I've called it a subculture often, but it depends who you're talking to. Some people won't get it regardless of how you explain it, and some of those people are at shows right now. It is hard to get into it without sounding like a pretentious fool or some naive friendship-type guy. I would say that I feel as comfortable as I'm ever going to, socially, at a punk show. You can't go by appearance, when including or excluding people, because so much of the "fashion sense" of punk and hardcore has been co-opted and over-exposed, much like hip hop culture. It used to be easier to assume that if you saw a group of people that looked a certain way, that they were probably going to the same show you were, and that maybe you could even just go up and talk to them based on that perceived bond. It is still like that occasionally, but it used to be like that almost anytime you saw someone. I still see it as more than just music. I don't expect as much out of the people involved as I used to, though. I never have been able to explain it to civilians.

What do you mean when you say that you don't expect as much as you used to out of the people involved?

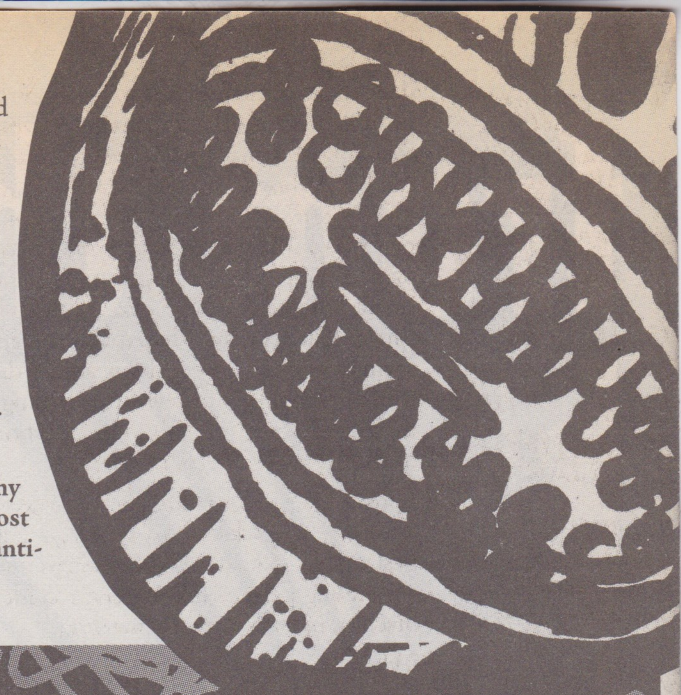
Dan: The more I got involved and the more it became part of my daily life, the more I was meeting people that were just as excited and motivated by it, and it felt like a community. I was young and I expected that we were all in this for the long haul because it was the only thing that didn't suck about being alive. Since then, I've seen so many of them lose interest, start hating it, and go away. Some of the people I met years ago are still around and active in one way or another, and some moved to other places but are still into it. It was hard to understand why people would disappear like that. It gets harder to reconcile this lifestyle with the responsibilities and disappointments of growing older, and the motivation changes because the energy of being involved in this new thing dissipates after years of going to shows and seeing so many people come and go. I should say that I don't expect everyone to remain committed to this like I used to. Punk rock pushing 30 is not the same punk rock as when you were a teenager, no matter how much you still love it.

Dan, you are what, 28 years old? Many years ago, *MRR* did a special feature about punks over 30. I think it was around 1988. At that time punks over thirty were pretty uncommon. Some of the folks interviewed were Pig Champion, Ian MacKaye, Jello Biafra and Dirk Dirksen. Now punks over thirty are a lot more common, particularly in Europe. To me, punk rock means different things to me at 36 than it did when I was 16. In many ways, I feel it is more important to be punk as an adult. Does punk rock have a different meaning for you now, as opposed to when you first got into it?

Dan: I agree that it is more important to be punk as an adult, especially because it's looked at as being something that kids use to rebel and then grow out of. Of course, the world doesn't traditionally change for the better, so why would anyone stop rebelling unless they are giving up and joining it. It's not just about rebelling against the things in the world that ruin us, but creating an alternative to those things. As an adult, it is easier to accomplish some of that, whether it's opening a record store, booking tours for bands from other countries, being a school teacher that isn't like the ones that you had as a kid, or just being around to show that it doesn't end with your 20s. Having that kind of perspective on it now has given me a lot of respect for the people that have stuck around, and has driven it even further into the way I approach things in my daily life.

When I was a kid, I expected that we could make the world a better place just by taking these lessons and ideas to heart and going out into the world with them, but now I feel more like creating and sustaining our own alternative subculture is more important than fucking with the perpetually worthless general population. Although I still concern myself with the outside world, I am always conscious that it is full of enemies and that I will never feel safe in it. That has not changed since I first got into punk. I think I'm answering the question, but I'm not sure. I still have a deep respect for this music and its ideals because of the influence they've had on my life, and I understand that it has its ups and downs like anything else. I can't see a future where its not part of my life.

When I first saw the cover of the SSD album, The Kids Will Have Their Say, the one with the gang of punks charging up the steps of the Massachusetts state house, I thought, "Wow, this music has a lot of potential power." And when I read the lyrics for the first MDC album, I couldn't believe it. Their message was so extreme it was kind of scary. I mean, I was like 15 at the time. And your band covers a Crass song. Do you feel that playing political, protest-style music has accomplished anything in punk rock's long history? Have all of these bands and records made any difference at all?



Dan: You could say that just by virtue of still being here that it has accomplished something. I think a big part of why it has survived is because of the social and political commentary that became such a part of it in the late 70s and early 80s. That punk bands speak about these things and the community, in a very general sense, concerns itself with the world and its future, which alone makes it different from every other youth culture. Even if we just pay lip service to the problems of the world, that sets us apart. As far as whether it has accomplished anything, I know it has affected individuals and their specific lives, but on a global scale, I think it is too early to really say. It has definitely made an impact culturally, although probably not in the way bands like Crass and Conflict and MDC would have liked. But there is a long, shitty future for humans, and many songs left to write against their actions and behavior.

80s hardcore spawned thousands of anti-Reagan songs. Off the top of my head, I can only think of one anti-Clinton song. Do you think punk lost some of its bite in the 90s? And do you think this decade will see some anti-Bush songs? Surely Bush is way more of an asshole than Reagan.

Dan: The Holy Mountain already has two songs about that guy, and another coming on the new record. And there will surely be more them, both from us and others. I think political punk went more underground in the 90s, but there were still bands like Dropdead, Crudos, Propagandhi, and Good Riddance, who were all very political and were not mincing words. Those were the bands that really inspired me back then, and still do. At the beginning of the 90s, when Bush the First was still in office, we all hated him and there were songs about him. Ministry even had a song about him. But when Clinton came in, he wasn't immediately a shit heel and rode into office on a lot of youthful support, partially because of how much Bush was disliked (and that he was just old). Clinton came off as an alright guy, whether he really was or whether he was continuing on in the same ways Bush had. It didn't feel like there was as much to fight against. That is the nature of the liberal approach to domestic policy, to sometimes do good for the populace, but to always make it seem like they are; to pacify people, to make it seem like things are much better now than they were, even if they are only a little better or the same. It is no secret that Clinton sent off bombing missions and watched over his period of our long term, fucked-up foreign policy. However, at home things did seem to get better. He took credit for raising the minimum wage while still driving down the national debt, and outside of the conservative Republican constituency (those being wealthy business interests, the small number of wealthy celebrities that aren't Democrats, and a whole lot of white Christians and racists) most of the country was fairly content. I think, except for the more die-hard followers of world events—the readers of Chomsky and the like—average Americans were being told things were good and they believed it, and that seeped into the broader punk rock scene. Not just a large part of the punk scene, but a large part of the population lost its teeth in the 90s. However, the conservatives and moral crusaders and racists and defenders of wealth who enjoyed so much support in the 80s found their teeth again in the 90s and are now shaking popular opinion like a piece of torn meat.

Why don't your lyrics rhyme?

Dan: Because most of the time I hate some fucker too much to fuck around and be clever.

Please describe what your band sounds like in ten words or less without comparing it to another band.

Dan: Sounds like fist fights.

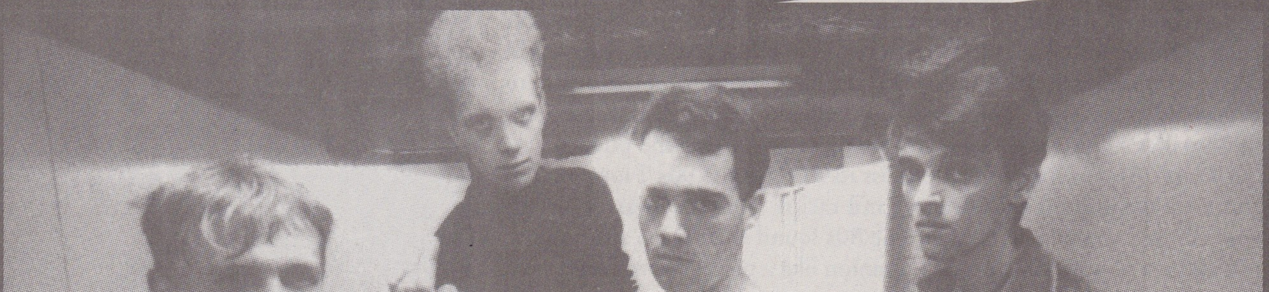
And that is everything I want to know about your band, unless there is something else you would like to add.

Dan: We just recorded a 7", titled Wrath, that should be out on No Idea by April. We're in the middle of recording a full-length, also on No Idea, to be released around June or July.

INTERVIEW BY BOB SUREN

from the vaults

cólera, brazil



nao religiao, brazil

spermbirds, germany

TOXIC SHOCK

TOXIC SHOCK
By Lance Hahn

Having spent several years playing music with Metro Youth and then Sanction, sax player Heather AKA Heff left to start a new band dealing with music she was more inspired by and politics that were more personal to her. The result was the two-piece, Toxic Shock. Along with her friend Alice Marsh, the two women formed an avant-garde punk group dealing specifically with issues of anarcho-feminism. Unlike many other anarcho bands that had to one degree or another paid lip service to the issue of women's equality, for Toxic Shock it was much more of a passion.

Heff in Airstrip Two fanzine, "I used to be really into all the labels like anarchist/lesbian/pacifist/vegan sort of thing. 'I've got the labels, I've got the answer for every type of problem there is and my world view is *zap*!' But I just can't think like that anymore. It's too big. I can only think about the people I live with and work with and one to one contact, like talking to you. So if what we're saying to you makes you think about things you haven't thought about before, then yes, it's changing. If you go from here thinking 'Fucking man-hating lesbians' then it isn't changing. I don't see what I'm doing on stage with a band as preaching or taking a message out to convert people. It's really to entertain people and trying to reach out. If people are concerned and interested in what we're saying than maybe it'll act as a catalyst to make them speak up."

In many ways foreshadowing Bikini Kill and the Riot Grrrl movement, they in some ways were attempting to reconcile radical feminist ideals with the meanings of beauty and the aesthetic of sexuality.

Heff in Airstrip Two fanzine, "One thing about feminism is that we used to get a lot of shit for being sexy because we were doing a lot of fairly heavy feminist anti-heterosexual stuff. People used to say it was anti-sexual intercourse and they used to say, 'You can't do that and be sexy! It's not fair, you turn me on!' and that would be the essence of what men were saying to us and I'd say, 'Well, that's your problem'. There are different ways of being sexual, we have got to reclaim that as well."

Also foreshadowing the Riot Grrrl style, the group used testimonial as a powerful way to personalize what sexism was and it's interference with daily life.

From Airstrip Two fanzine:

Al, "Sometimes even the warmest hearted of us, who've got really good men friends and sleep with blokes, are walking down the street at night and a car full of blokes will come up to you and shout at you..."

Heff, "Like happened to us the other night..."

Al, "...like 'I wanna fuck you, Blondie!' and they get out and try to stop you from walking away. Then at those moments, you can't think about the nice men and the sympathetic men, the ones you love and the ones you're good mates with, the ones you go down the pub with. There's just them. You get out of that situation and you're walking home and there's another two men, over the other side of the road, walking towards you. You don't know whether they're okay or not. You have to see them as the enemy."

Like many women, the inability to work within a male dominated scene led to what some call separatism. What seems like a logical step even today is thought of as controversial and, the most absurd concept of all, reverse sexism.

Heff in Airstrip Two, "It's hard to explain that, because as soon as you try to create space for yourself as a woman you start to get attacked. Like Greenham being attacked. I mean there are a dozen other peace camps that if men really wanted to take action against nuclear weapons they could be going there. But Greenham Common isn't just about that. It's about Women's space and making all sorts of links between all sorts of violence. And about a different way of living and realizing that the way you go about fighting for something is as important as what you're fighting for."

Greenham Common was probably the most high-profile anti-nuclear protest in Britain. Fighting the placement of American Cruise missiles the Women's Peace Camp opened there in 1981 and quickly more than just anti-war. It became an experiment in alternative social structures only coming to an end in September of 2000.

Heff in Airstrip Two, "Greenham isn't about Cruise. Greenham is about women's space. Greenham is about being the only place in this country where women can go to. There isn't anywhere else like it. You think of all the places in this country that are only open to men and are frightening to women for instance, gigs. You think of the fact that women can't go

any7where on their own without getting hassle and stuff, and there's one women's space and all these men go 'ooooooh'."

Al, "...I know loads of people, me included, for whom that women only space at Greenham is really important, as a breather to sort ourselves out. Don't get me wrong; I'm not a separatist you know. I work with men; I work with an all-male rock band, the Nightingales, a bunch of lads from Birmingham. They're my best mates. They're really good. But I also sleep with a woman who lives at Greenham, and for her that space is really important. It provided somewhere for her to get away from a situation she was in, like financially and trying to find somewhere else to live, because she was living with a man she didn't want to live with. Financially it's hard for a woman to get away from that sort of situation because of the way the dole is run, so that women sleeping with men have their dole cut. It's just really important to have somewhere to get away. Also women who have husbands and kids and just need to get away sometimes. There are also women living there who haven't got anywhere else to go. One little space. It's not too much to ask."

Having left as sax player for Sanction, who at that point were fairly inactive having failed at getting their single on Crass Records released, Heff started the band mostly as a whim.

Heff in Airstrip Two fanzine, "Well, we only started out as a joke. We got a couple of songs together for a women's disco and we called ourselves Toxic Shock for a laugh. And then we started writing our own stuff a bit later on. It was only a part-time thing; we never thought it would get this far. And it's good for people to talk about things like periods..."

"...It gets people talking about periods, a thing that is really hushed up. You pretend that women don't bleed. But most of the reason for the name is 'cos I think it sounds really good."

But soon with some thought, the band kept the name lending itself to further bring attention to the disease.

Heff in Airstrip Two, "And the whole fact that it isn't researched at all. It's really interesting actually because recently I stopped using tampons and started using pads and my periods have been less painful and shorter. A bit messier but a hell of a lot less hassle to me. I don't know whether that's me coming to terms with the fact that I bleed every month. I think that it's really important that you can print in a fanzine that Heff out of Toxic Shock uses pads now instead of tampons. It's quite an ordinary thing to talk about, like what you eat or how you dress or whatever. It's very ordinary and very boring."

With all the politics, a lot of what gets lost with a band like Toxic Shock is just how unusual and advanced their music was. Fusing together jazz, funk and soul, the two-piece ("We're not a duo! We're a band!" Heff) made a lot of noise with just bass, sax and vocals. Eerily melodic, the music is truly impossible to label. There are moments that are reminiscent of the Au Pairs and others that are so melodic they're like a very minimal version of the recordings of Jeanne Lee with Archie Shepp.

The track the band is probably most known for is the four-minute warning of "Remote Control." Featured on the Mortarhate compilation LP "Who? What? Why? When? Where?" the band were featured up alongside Conflict, Anthrax, Poison Girls, Lost Cherrees, Icons of Filth and a dozen more anarcho types. The song is a stark contrast to the guitar punk of most of the rest of the record.

The song is an eerie discussion on sex as porn as prostitution.

Screw her in your fantasy
Screw her in your fantasy
Screw her in your fantasy
Screw her in your head
Selling my sex
Fucking by remote control

The song is direct and harsh and takes the same tone many other anarcho bands had taken. But instead of singing about animal rights, the system, war or some other, Toxic Shock's attacks were as aimed as the peace punk community as much as anywhere else.

Al in Airstrip Two, "You can't distinguish between men. It's coming at you all the time. Sometimes it's all against you. You get so desperate. You can't afford to be charitable. Like we took a detour to get some chips down this really dangerous road and we thought 'It's alright, we've got our big hefty raincoats on, we're both big women.'"

Heff, "I'm about six feet tall."

Al, "And it still happens. And you get all the little things that are just so ridiculous. You know, we're setting up our gear and the PA bloke is trying to help and I say 'No, I'll sort it out myself' and he'll say, 'Independent little lady, aren't you?' Because I'm a woman he can't actually see I'm an equal being. That happens all the time."

The band's only record of their own was made through a deal with Vindaloo Records. Owned by former Prefects and Nightingales guitarist, Robert Lloyd, the eccentric label was a good home for the band. The label also boasted releases by Legs Akimbo, a skiffle band named Terry and Gerry and the Ted Chippington's Party Hits records to name a few. The label would later have big commercial success releasing the first records from We've Got A Fuzzbox.

For Toxic Shock, their record was a six song 12" called "A Dubious Deal." Songs for this record include "Fences," "Always Lying," "Poison Embrace," "Dancing In The Park," "Separate Cages," and "Resistance."

As the band's only record, it was also their only release for Vindaloo. But Alice would pop up again soon playing bass on the Bob and Vi duet single featuring label boss Robert Lloyd with Vi Subversa from Poison Girls.

Before the end of 1985, the lightening rod that was Toxic Shock was done.

Heff from Airstrip Two, "We're not just talking about direct threats and physical violence. There are other ways that men can take over space, like not letting you finish what you're trying to say or... If you can ever get hold of a book called 'Man-Mad Language' it's really worth a read. It talks about how language is constructed for men's benefit. I've got this thing where sometimes I think something that's really important and there aren't any words for it. And I start trying to describe it to a woman and she says 'Oh yea, I know what you mean, I've felt that.' Then you've got a feeling but no words to describe it. And then I try and explain the same thing to a man and I just can't get through. And it doesn't matter how much I love that man, I lived with a man for a while and I've got male lovers and it doesn't matter hw much I love that man. I can't explain that feeling, there's just no communication. Words never get invented and it's just so hard."

ANARKA AND POPPY

ALL THAT IS SHATTERED: THE ANARKA AND POPPY STORY
By Lance Hahn

With nothing but a few demo recordings remaining to document their music, Anarka and Poppy was an exciting and well-respected band from the Preston anarcho/squat scene of the early 80s.

Starting in 1983 from the ashes of Nihilist Insurrection, the band were initially a trio with Jane on vocals, Sean on guitar and Stoko on drums. The band members had already been active in anarchist politics as well as animal rights activities. In fact, in those early days as a trio the band were known simply as P.O.P.P.I.E.S., which was the name of their anarchist collective. The letters stood for Prisoners Of Pain and Power In Every State.

With just a few rehearsals under their belt, the band was anxious to get out there and spread the good word.

From *Indoctrination For The Ignorant Children* fanzine, "We started in October '83 and did our first gig with Disorder in Liverpool six days after forming. Then three days after that we played with the Subhumans and Faction in Manchester."

By this time, the band had decided on Anarka and Poppy as their name to more clearly communicate their ideological line.

A&P, "Anarka stands for anarchy, the only position we as a group see fit to live in. Poppy stands for red in the black/red revolutionary flag."

Spurred on by the response from their live performances, the band recorded their one demo before the year was up.

From *Indoctrination For The Ignorant Children* fanzine, "We went down really well and sicne then we've played loads of gigs around the place, released 'All That Is Shattered' after we'd started up our own 'New Birth' tape label..."

The five songs were recorded at Twilight Studios in Manchester and clearly communicated the bands convictions. Songs included "Nightmare," "If It Dies We Die," "Blind Acceptance," "Leader of the Pack," and "P.O.P.P.I.E.S."

Shortly after the release of the tape, a fellow anarcho named Yoh was added on bass.

From *Indoctrination For The Ignorant Children* fanzine, " now we have a bassist and the sound is incredibly better. Three of us are vegatablarians (sic) and I am a vegan and we basically believe in love, people, human rights and LIFE."

Anarka and Poppy did much work outside of regular band activities as well. From producing fanzines and leaflets to corresponding with people from all over the world, the band in many ways epitomized the communication that made the world a little smaller in the days before email.

They were also politically active, of course, often involved in spontaneous direct action that lead to more than one run in with the law. Not that the band were disinclined to talk about it.

"On September 19th five of us (including me and Jane from A&P) were walking the dog on the Lancashire moors and found dead 'wasted' bodies of birds lying on the floor. So, being very angry we proceeded to knock down thirteen shooting butts and then burnt down a shooters cabin. On the way back we were greeted by 'uniformed scum,' the gamekeepers had seen us! We were put in separate cells (separate - sexist?) for 24 hours in the district filth station and then appeared in court on January 27th charged with arson and criminal damage. We caused 5,220 pounds worth of damage to the Duke of Westminster's estate and we feel they deserved every penny of damage we caused and are fucking glad it caused them trouble. We were fined 20 pounds each and 'given' 60 hours of community work to do!"

The band's final recording was a three song EP for All The Madmen (The Mob's label) but for one reason or another (mostly financial), the label passed on it. The record never did see the light of day even after speculation that Spiderleg might put it out after All The Madmen didn't.

By the end of 1984, Anarka and Poppy had split up. But the split didn't last long. The following year, Jane and Sean got the group back together as a six piece adding Neil and Paul on drums and bass as well as Shaun on synthesizer and Christine on tambourine. They renamed their tape label Happy @pple Tapes and a second demo was set to be recorded in April of 1985. But before the end of that year, the group had split for good.

IF YOU WISH YOUR HOME LIKE THIS, THEN SO IT SHALL BE
IF YOU WANT TO SEE THE FLOWERS AND THE SUNSHINE, YOU SHALL SEE THEM
BUT IF YOU LET THE POWERS OF THE WORLD CHAIN YOU DOWN
ALL YOU SHALL SEE OF YOUR WORLD IS GUNS, FIGHTING AND OPPRESSION
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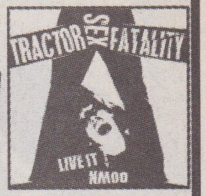

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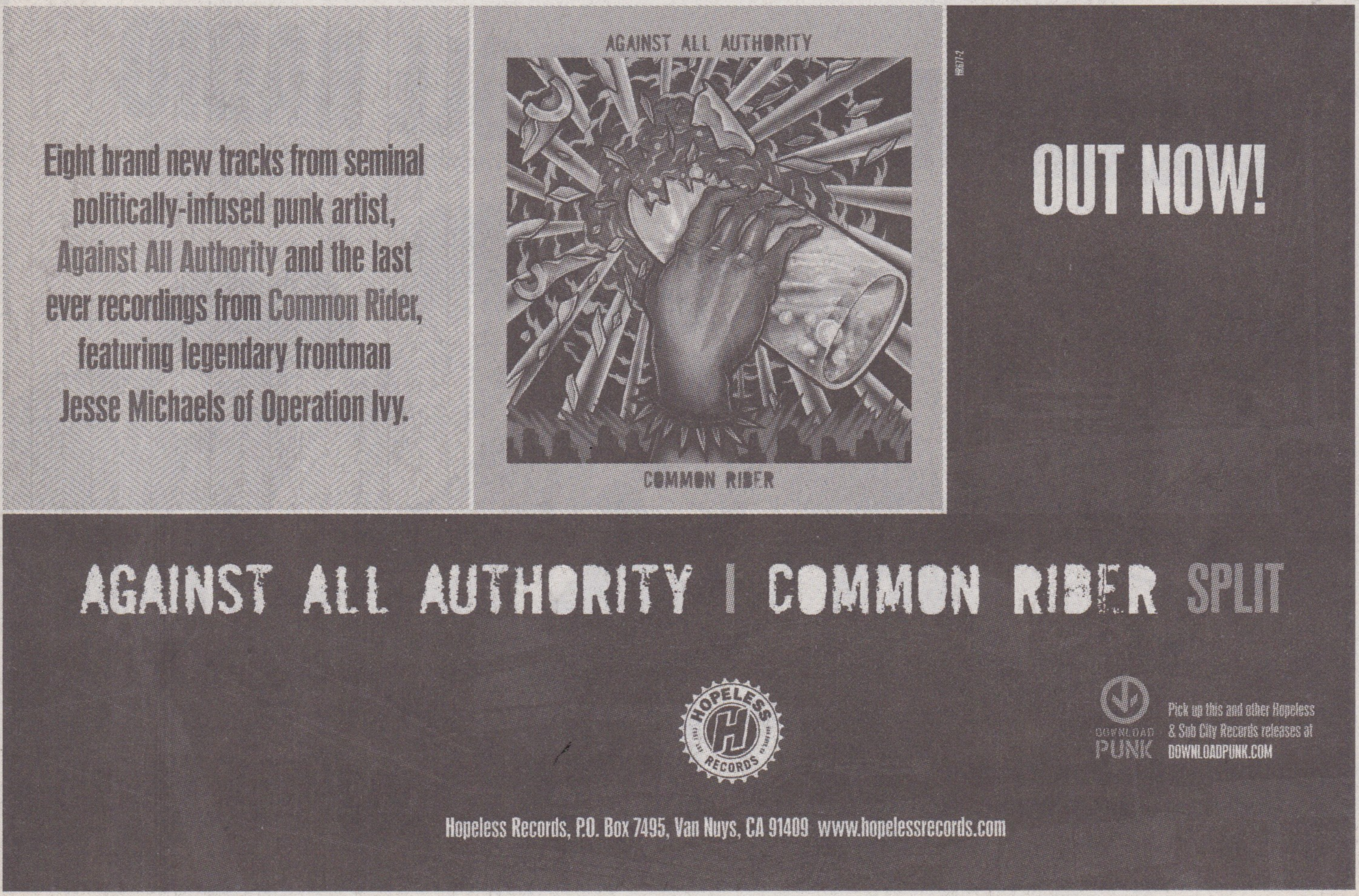
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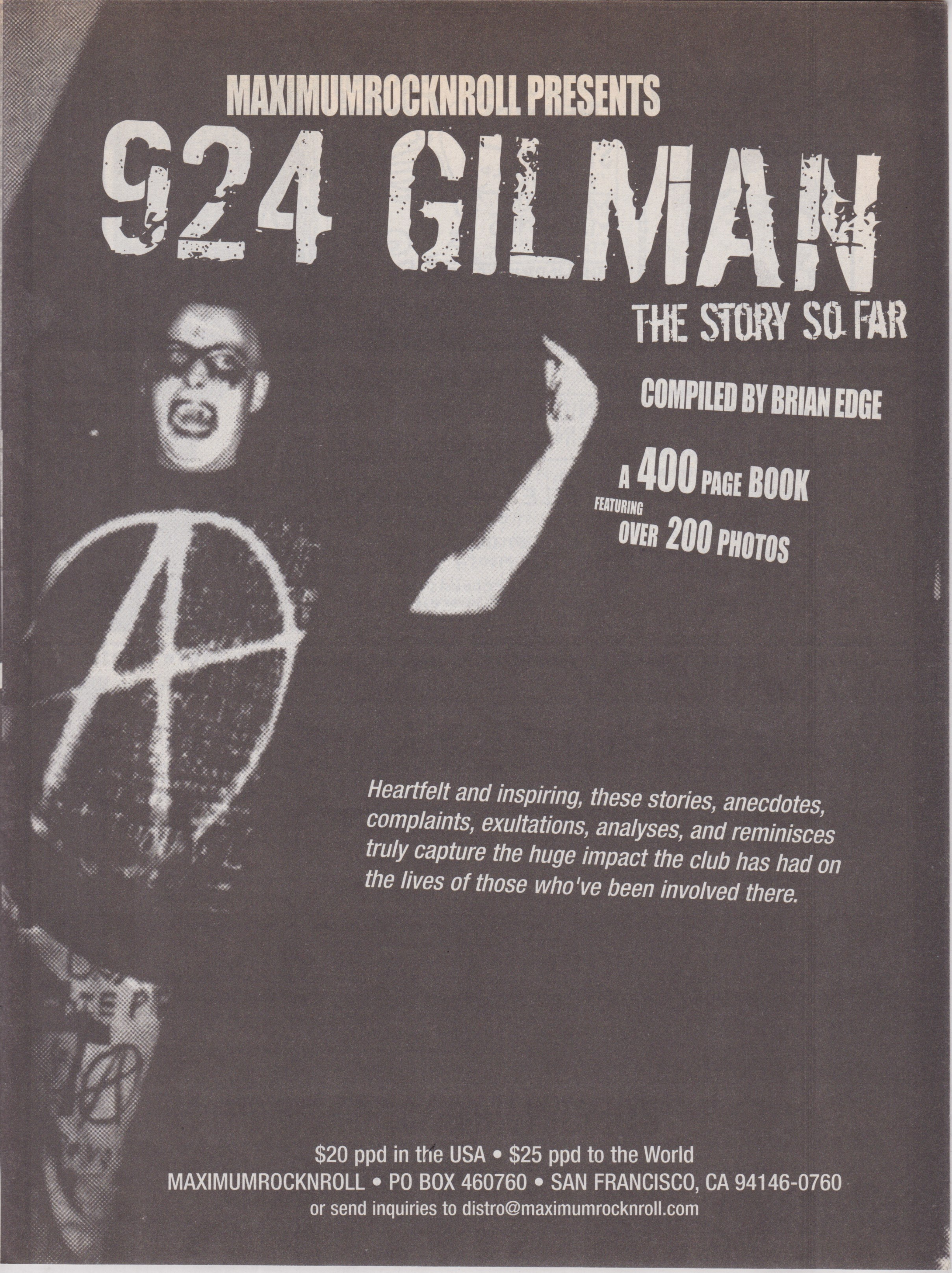
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THE BILL BONDSMEN

"THAT WOULD BE THE DAY THAT PEOPLE WERE THROWING CHICKEN BONES AT US AND I KEPT LIGHTING OFF FIREWORKS OVER WOODWARD TILL THE COPS CAME BY. I ALSO LANDED A BOTTLE ROCKET IN MY MOM'S LAP. HI, MOM!"

What bands come to mind when you think Motor City? KISS? The White Stripes? Kid Rock? Well, never mind the rock stars. Ladies and gentlemen, this is the Bill Bondsmen. Interview by Mike Prezzato.

MRR: State your name and musical instrument.

Tony: Tony, AKA, Gabby and I do the crooning with my velvety-smooth voice. I'm also a hyper-active wreck, as the rest of the band can tell you.

Amado: Amado. I play the guitar and write a lot of the music, for lack of a better term. I prefer to call Tony "Talkin' Tony" because he's a mile a minute with that mouth. Kind of like a bald Peter Wolf.

Rob: Strings times four.

Mark: Drums and cymbals.

MRR: How did you start playing together?

Tony: Hmmm. About three years back I used to spin records at a local watering hole and I knew Amado and Rob from their other band. Amado used to come when I DJ'd. I decided to get Amado on board DJ'ing so I could spend less time spinning and more time sucking back the free drinks. At the time, I had the itch to start a new band and talked with Amado about it. He came up with the name, but in a drunken stupor I thought I had come up with it. Must have sounded funny when I told him, "I got a great idea for a band name." We kicked around ideas for line-ups and settled on Rob on the bass. Now, we're on our third, best, and hopefully final drummer, Mark, who's a total rager on the drums.

Amado: If memory serves—and it usually doesn't—Tony and I were DJ-ing at a local bar and we threw around the idea of putting a band together. Rob and I were, and still are, in another band, but we were up to it. It just kind of snowballed from there. We went through two drummers, a lot of bad shows, and now we're at the point where I'm stoked on the band.

As far as the name, I had a side band that never got off the ground and it was one of the names we were gonna use. Incidentally, two of the members were the two original drummers, Nick Chunks and Bunny. My buddies, Magic Matt and Baby Sinister, were also in the band. I think the first version of "Chargers and Bargers" was played by that band.

Rob: I was just cooling out and Amado asked me if I wanted to start a little something-something on the side, with him and Gabby, and I said, "Sure." We are on our third, and hopefully last, drummer. Our first drummer kooked out on us for whatever reasons and the second one just wasn't working out as well as we thought it could. But with Mark joining the band, I think our music has definitely taken the next step—he's really added to our sound, helping fill it out more.

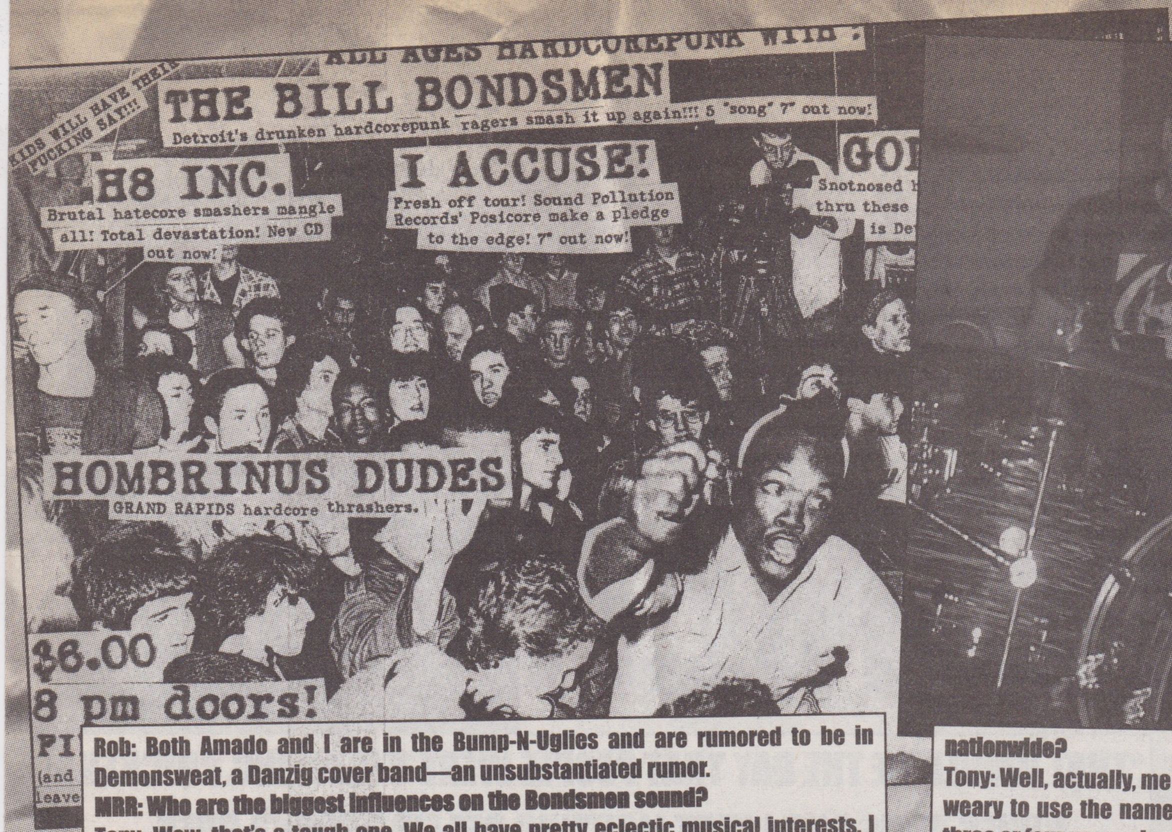
Mark: I joined them last July.

MRR: What other bands have you been in?

Tony: Currently, nothing else, since my day job, girlfriend, and record collecting kind of limit my time. I used to be in a local beat combo named Lindane who were relatively famous in backwoods parts of Ohio for being the finest Napalm Death/Crossed Out cover band in the land. That fizzled out after one well-circulated demo tape. The rest of the outfits were either joke bands that never made it out of the basement or only did one show. Incidentally, cuts from the original Lindane demo, from when we sounded more like an Indigesti/Wretched cover band, will be on your cassette comp with your zine, Mykie.

Mark: I've played drums, bass and guitar in several bands in Lansing and Salt Lake—played shows, but that's it.

Amado: Rob and I are currently in the Bump-n-Uglies, who are about to turn ten years old this spring. We're kind of a Detroit fixture, much like the potholes and lousy football team. I also did time in a band called the Catfish for about two years before we imploded. Kind of like a Andrew Dice Clay record with three chords behind it.



Rob: Both Amado and I are in the Bump-N-Uglies and are rumored to be in Demonsweat, a Danzig cover band—an unsubstantiated rumor.

MRR: Who are the biggest influences on the Bondsmen sound?

Tony: Wow, that's a tough one. We all have pretty eclectic musical interests. I personally listen to a wide mix of stuff and a lot of it has had an influence on vocals and lyrics. I try to glean rather than lift but I think it's fairly obvious at some points. I'll say *Killed By Death*, Alice Cooper, Poison Idea, Raw Power, Midwest hardcore, Stooges, Robert Johnson, Roxy Music, Terveet Kadet, Bad Posture, Germs, Sockeye—I could go on and on. I think we take a pretty cool approach to the music and I try to not write about the same old shit and if I do write something well treaded, I try to kind of say it in a totally different way. I'm constantly reading, so something will catch my eye and I try to write from that perspective. But, overall, I'll say Pabst.

Amado: The thing I'm most stoked on this band is that none of our songs sound alike, but you can tell they're by the same band. As far as what I'm into, here's the short list: Buzzcocks, Naked Raygun, Negative Approach, Goblin, Jesus and Mary Chain, Prince, TSOL, Adolescents, Big Boys, X, Husker Du, New York Dolls; I could go on and on. I'm sure I swipe bits and pieces from all those bands, but I'm sneaky about it. Robble Robble.

Mark: The older songs were more straight-ahead. After I joined, the new ones got a lot faster, kind of herky-jerky at times. I listen to hardcore-punk-thrash shit, but I guess it kind of starts with Minor Threat, Gorilla Biscuits for me and branches way out. So when Amado plays a riff, I'll interpret it my way and fuck with breaks, tempos, and arrangements. In other words, I'm a hack. But then Rob saves the day and puts all the flavor on it and then Tony screams all over our pretty new song.

Rob: Well Amado is basically a songwriting machine. He comes up with most of the riffs and I add my two cents to it, as does Mark. Personally, I listen to a little bit of this, a little of that, and maybe a smidget of that. Be it jazz, country, rock 'n' roll or punk. I think the more of a variety of music you listen to, all the better.

MRR: For those not from Detroit, explain the possibly odd-sounding name, who the guy is, et cetera.

Tony: Bill Bonds is a former newscaster from Detroit who is a total alcoholic asshole. He was in *Escape From The Planet Of The Apes*. He drove his car thru the Channel Seven lobby while passed out, challenged the mayor of Detroit to a boxing match, and the loser had to move a downed tree that was blocking traffic; I could go on and on. Regardless, if you go to our website you can watch a video of him ranting. Anyways, he's always been in trouble with the cops so Bill Bonds and Bail Bondsmen and Bill Bondsmen.

Rob: What Gabby said!

MRR: You've recently released your first 7" on Tony's Fourteegee label. How many were pressed and how has the response been to it thus far, around Detroit and nationwide?

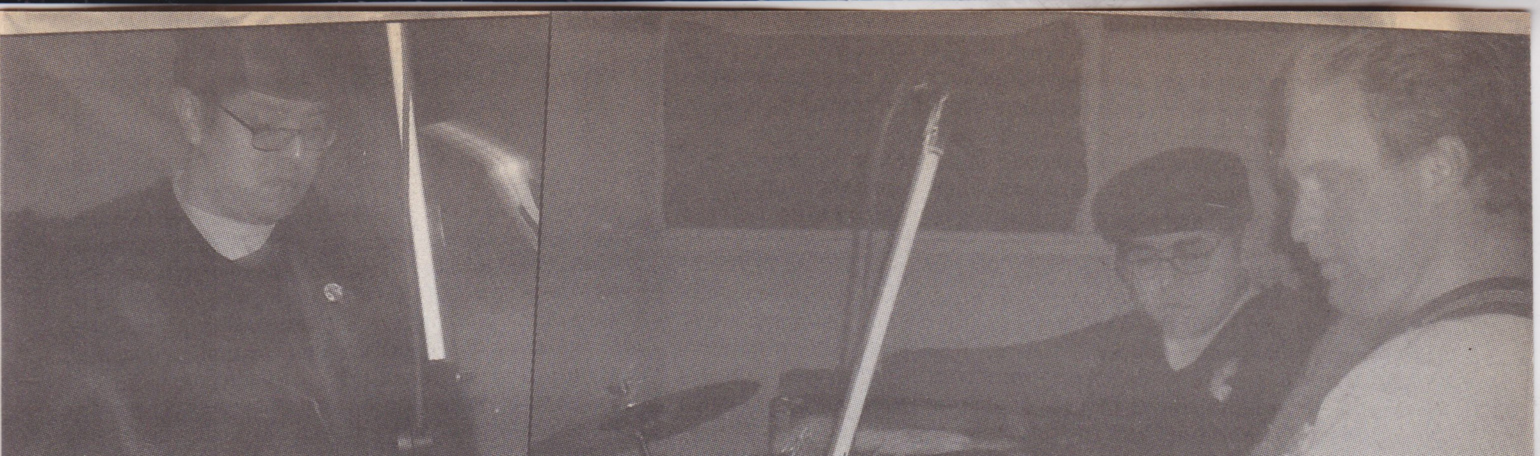
Tony: Well, actually, me and Rob paid for it. I was kind of weary to use the name again since it had been about three or four years since I'd really done much and there was controversy concerning an aborted release before the label went belly-up. We didn't want to sit on our asses and wait for anyone. We had a great recording—thanks to Jim Diamond at Ghetto Recorders—that, we felt, summed us up. If you want all the boring details on variations, color, et cetera, check the website. There were 500 or so total, not counting test presses. The response has been excellent. Lots of people seem to like it and it's already in Europe and across the US without a real review yet, which took a jaded fuck like me slightly by surprise. A good chunk, close to half, are already sold or with distros. We owe a lot of good friends thanks for their help and respect, but I won't gush in print. You know who you are and that we love you. By the way, all Fourteegee releases are out of print aside from the second Michael Knight EP — think Void and the Big Boys weirder moments and you got the idea. I still have some copies of that that are taking up space.

Rob: Gabby's the record nerd amongst us for those who haven't noticed yet. We recorded with Mr. Jim Diamond, with whom the Bump-n-Uglies have recorded with for years. I think he did an excellent job, as usual, recording us. That's hands down my favorite place to record. He's honest as all get out and never puts any pressure on you. He's always pretty laid back.

One thing that I wanted to avoid was recording and then sitting on it for an extended period of time. I wanted the record to be out as soon as possible. As things worked out, we recorded in early November and released it in early December. Not too shabby, huh?

MRR: What's the story with the tiny noose and the rotten tooth included in with the 7" at the record release?

Tony: Well, I wanted to do something extra for the record release. I've always liked getting something extra to remember a show by. Our cover has a noose on it, so Christy and Wedge from Crunky Kids were kind enough to make little nooses for us. The teeth are real



but they're super sterilized so, no fears if you got one. They go along with the song "Crucial Tooth," y'know? A loving ode to tooth decay deserves a rotten tooth. Besides, I was too chicken to spit them on the crowd at the Dwarves show. I was worried I would swallow them and be stuck choking while everyone thought it was part of the gig. By the way, fellow collector dorks, they are long gone and there were only 20 like that. So, happy hunting.

Rob: As a child, I had my fingers pinched in between the seat and the basket part of a shopping cart and also in a car door. When I was a tad older I was fixing my BMX bike and my finger got pinched between the sprocket and chain. Ouch times many!

MRR: Any new releases in the works? If so, seeing how the 7" plays mostly newer material, will it have the older songs off of the band's two demos?

Tony: Well, the 7" has the same songs as the second demo and two songs that were on the first demo. We were gonna do one different song, but we were all not thinking when we recorded and forgot it. There's talk of doing something else soon. I won't go into it all because there are too many ifs and maybes, but I'm sure some of the older tunes will wind up put out on something. Plus we have about four to six tunes that we play out that haven't been recorded.

Rob: Well, I think its safe to say that once we get more material ready we will record again. Whether it's for a full-lengther or another 7" still remains to be seen.

MRR: Will it be on Fourteegee, or would you consider shopping it around to another label?

Tony: Who knows? There're only so many labels I would trust. I doubt we would shop it in a real way but if a cool label wants to do our next thing, I'm more than into it. I sent our very first demo out to some labels and "scene tastemakers" just to see what people thought, which was probably a mistake since we were too raw and shitty at that point. I guess we'll just have to see how it all plays out. We've gotten tons of great feedback from people we respect, so who knows how it will go. I know it sounds lame, but when you're from Detroit and you're pretty much isolated you kind of have to fight to be noticed. Well, unless you wanna dry hump the Sonics or the Kinks and you can put up with Kim Fowley.

Amado: If there's a label that would be able to do more than we can do ourselves, I'm all for it. I've had both good and bad experiences with labels, so I tend to be a bit more cautious, myself.

Mark: Shop it? Yeah, I wanna shop it to Geffen records so we can do a package tour with Rise Against. Think of all the sweet cheddar!

MRR: Have the Bondsmen been on any compilations? If not, anything in the works?

Tony: We will be on Thuggy's new compilation on Hibachi Records with a bunch of great bands from the Midwest and Japan. I'm psyched! Chainsaw, Insane Youth AD, Quill, Upstab, Microfilm, and Knuckleheads are on it. We kicked out a track that I feel is one of our strongest. I'm almost bummed it wasn't on the EP.

Mark: That comp song is my favorite out of the ones we recorded. It's on the web site. The song's called "Human Veal."

MRR: As most punks know, the Detroit area has a great hardcore legacy, Negative Approach, Necros, the Meatmen, the State, the Fix—and that's only the early-to-mid-80s. Do you think this has held up over the years with newer bands?

Tony: Well, only one of the bands you listed was a Detroit band, but we'll let that slide. I think it's held up, but the problem is that most bands from here don't last long. There's a serious lack of steady places to play that are open to everyone. Meaning, if you don't know so-and-so you can have issues. We haven't had a problem, but I see a lot of bands with younger people in them—we're all pushing 30 or already there—struggling. It's a damn shame, because I think we've all seen our favorite bands go by without even a decent recording.

Another thing is a lot of people book shows and don't do the legwork to get more than a handful of people to the gig. It makes it more of a social scene rather than something where everyone can be involved. It's pretty routine to hear people complain about how no one was there, but when you only put up 100 flyers and post on the internet about it, how many people are you really reaching? I think we also got a bad rap from the mid-80s to the present day thanks to Nazis and right wing shit which has all faded, since all the goons pretty much fazed out when they realized Geraldo was off the air and Sally wasn't taking their calls. It sucks, because a lot of bands like Feisty Cadavers and SBLC never got their due. There's an untold history to Detroit punk. Sorry for the rant!

Rob: It seems like there always has been a few bands that keep the torch alive through the years, but then there's bands that you think will be around for a while and are really good and then they go and do something like break up. It will be interesting to see what happens, though.

MRR: What's your take on the Detroit scene *today*?

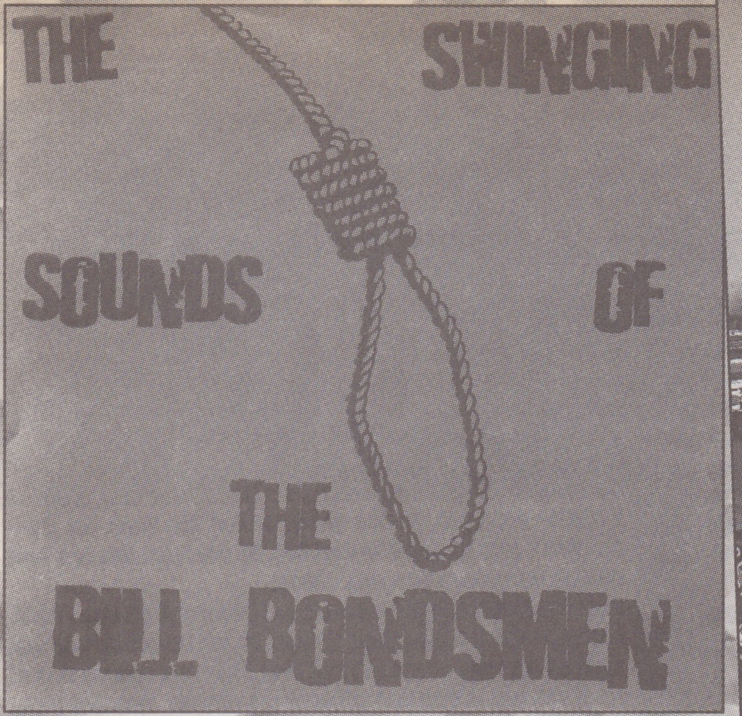
Tony: No complaints. We get a pretty wide assortment of bands through here and we've had the chance to play with bands ranging from Damage Deposit to the Tyrades. I wish that some of the separating between the punk and hardcore scenes would end since we're obviously all the same. We try to do our part by playing eclectic bills and inviting younger bands to play.

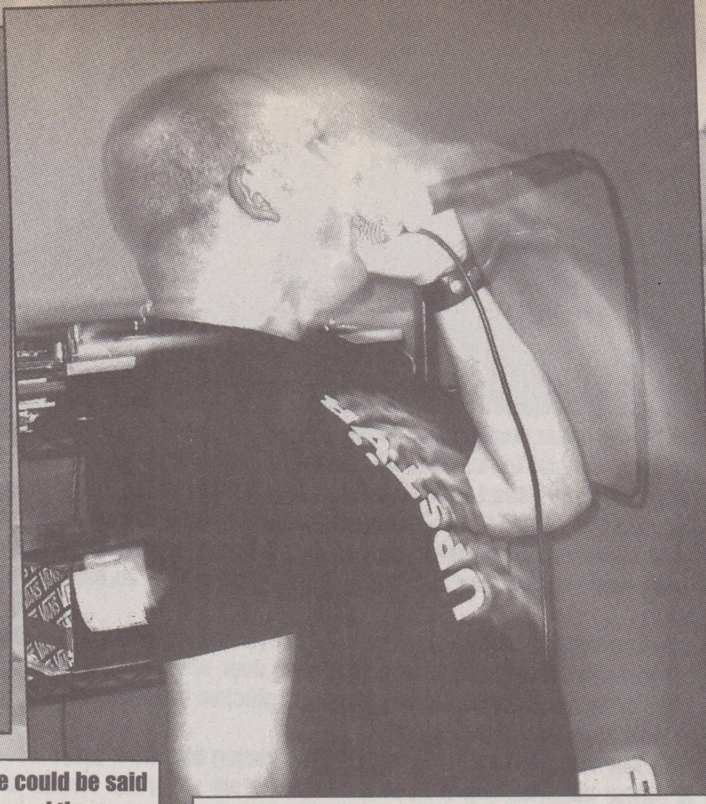
Rob: It's pretty all right. Of course you're going to have your egotists, and assholes. But that's always been the case.

Amado: There're still too many Prince Valiant haircuts for me.

MRR: Who are your favorite bands to play with, or just favorite local bands in general?

Tony: My favorite people to play with would be Tyrades, Clone Defects, Upstab, Crunky Kids, State, AmpsIIEleven, Amino Acids — I could go on and on. I won't go into least favorite, but we've had some dickheads we've dealt with.





Rob: Shows with the Amino Acids are generally a good time. But the same could be said about a lot of other bands, local or otherwise, Amps II Eleven are always a good time.

Amado: I liked playing with the Tyrades a lot. There's a *ton* of local bands that I enjoyed playing with too—Human Eye, Amino Acids, the State.

MRR: You've been playing out now for about two years. Can you recall a favorite show you've played so far? In summer '04, you did a show downtown in front of the Majestic Theatre on the bed of a truck, while Tony hurled fireworks into the crowd. That ones gotta be up there somewhere.

Tony: That would be the day that people were throwing chicken bones at us and I kept lighting off fireworks over Woodward till the cops came by. I also landed a bottle rocket in my mom's lap. Hi, mom! We used to destroy everywhere we played when we started, but we're a bit more mellow now. No more beer-can-filled piñatas, and not nearly as much violence when we play.

I would say when we played with Gordon Solie, Vivisick, Bruce Banner, Crunky Kids, Deadfall, and Jacked Up Zeros in Cleveland. It was the new lineup, we saw lots of old friends, ate well, drank a lot, and all the bands raged! Second best would be playing with Upstab, Human Eye, and Crunky Kids up here. Good times, good friends. I jumped in the air, slipped on beer and crunched cartilage in my knee. I couldn't walk at all for two days and walked like a gimp for another week. Like I said, we're not as violent but still full tilt wreckers, to say the least.

The worst would be when we played with the Dwarves and someone stole Amado's guitar. We'll find you, eventually.

Mark: I fucked up my wrist at that show. I got pushed off the stage and landed wrist and face first. I couldn't play for that whole week leading up to recording the 7"—I couldn't bend it and it killed. It was purple for weeks.

Rob: I like playing Thursday nights at the Magic Stick just cause you never know what's going to happen. It's usually just a bunch of ragers. The show in Cleveland was a fuckin' blast. Chicago's always a good time. Anywhere, really.

Amado: I'll have to say the summer '03 right after the big power blackout with the Clone Defects. That's the one with the piñata filled with beer, *warm* beer, *shitty* warm beer. That was a blast! That Cleveland gig was cool too, especially seein' GSMF.

MRR: Are there any plans for a tour? Or at least a few out-of-state-shows?

Tony: Well, we've played Chicago and Cleveland and will be back soon. We plan to kind of go where we're wanted and work paths there. We can't really do a full-blown tour unless it's totally organize, due to money and jobs. But weekends and whatnot are fine, until we can maybe get it together to really do it.

Rob: I would love to go out on the road for a couple of weeks, but with everyone working to pay bills, me being in school, and everything else that we're is involved in, it's kind of difficult. That's not to say that we won't ever tour. But right now, it'll be mostly just short weekend stints and assorted whatnot.

Amado: If we start to get some more steam behind us, I don't see why we shouldn't tour. Right now, we'll probably do some weekends around the Midwest and maybe go out East. I know the Uglies have a lot of out of town flavor planned, so that also has to go into consideration.

Mark: I only fly first class—so that limits everything.

MRR: What's next for the immediate future of the band? Unlimited commercial success?

Tony: Wait till you see our massive guarantee to pay for the tour bus. I plan on using the kid's money to fund purchasing a small island in the South Pacific. No seriously—I don't think we have any real concrete plans. Like Handsome Dick said, "This is just a hobby for me!"

Not that we don't love it, but reality sets in when the alarm clock goes off at 7 AM every day. The comp will be out someday and we'll squeeze a new recording out after this one is gone. Which should be soon, I hope.

Mark: Hopefully we'll practice this week.

Amado: I'm going to get some coffee, smoke a cigarette and listen to some Naked Raygun today.

MRR: Any last words?

Rob: Stay tough and keep strong.

Mark: Touring bands should try to come through Detroit more often. We're not the fattest or murder capital anymore—this year.

The Bill Bondsmen, 8863 Dixie Detroit, MI 48239
http://existentialista.com/bbm/bbm.htm

BRUCE BANNER

Bruce Banner is a fast-as-fuck hardcore punk band from Stockholm, Sweden who has been around since the year 2000. The quintet is made up by a bunch of guys who already have made their marks in the Swedish hardcore scene. Vocalist Per Thunell and guitarist Daniel Hammare were in the legendary grindcore outfit Filthy Christians. Per was also in Protes Bengt. Second vocalist Christoffer "138" Jonsson played bass in DS-13 and Epileptic Terror Attack. In 2001, the group released two 7"s: *I Love Fucked up Noise* (Bent Edge/Sound Of Betrayal/Putrid Filth Conspiracy) and a split with Sayyadina (Sounds Of Betrayal/ Putrid Filth Conspiracy). Last year, Bruce Banner released their first full-length album, *I've Had It With Humanity* (Busted Heads/625 Thrashcore), and went on their first major North American tour with Deadfall. In January 2005, Per T, Daniel, Christoffer, and new drummer Per Hedberg (The Kind That Kills) met up with *MaximumRocknRoll* in a seedy bar in Stockholm to discuss the recent tour, their new members, their music, and why SSD's *How We Rock* is a really good album. Bass player Lars Danielsson was on leave when this interview was conducted.

Interview by Daniel Johansson

MRR: Tell me something about your North American tour last summer. How did it go?

Christoffer: I thought it went very well. It was my fourth tour in the States as I've toured there before with DS-13 and ETA. It was mostly cool, but there are always pros and cons with touring. The biggest drawback was that we had to travel with two cars instead of one, which meant bigger expenses and less cash left over for the bands, but all in all it was a blast. The people in Deadfall are awesome, nice guys who made all the travelling worthwhile.

Per T: As Christoffer said, Deadfall was really cool to us and Scott had done a really great job of mapping out the tour.

Christoffer: As always when you're doing DIY tours, one night you're playing at some festival in front of 500 people and the next you're doing a basement show in front of fifteen. Even though we're not that well known in the States, the crowds seemed to like us and there weren't any real fiascos, maybe two or three bad shows on the whole tour.

MRR: Christoffer, was it any different to tour the USA with Bruce Banner than with your previous outfits?

Christoffer: With DS-13, we were a small, tight unit of four. This time around, it was a big fucking crew with thirteen people and two drivers.

Per T: It was like a circus act sometimes. It took three hours every morning to get everyone out of bed and get going. I've worked in a kindergarten, an experience that came in handy when you had to make sure that everyone was in place and on time.

Christoffer: Besides, Deadfall is a bunch of party animals. They outclassed us in the beer-drinking department. Our stand-in drummer Dadde (To What End, Wolfbrigade) managed to keep up with their pace, but I gave up after a few nights. They stayed up all night, every night, partying. It was totally sick.

MRR: Were there any shows that stood out from the rest?

Per T: I think the shows in San Francisco, Pittsburgh, Los Angeles, and Pointless Fest in Pennsylvania are the ones that really stand out. But the most memorable show is the one in Cleveland with Vivisick. We were scheduled to arrive at the venue at 3:00 pm, but were ten minutes late. When we showed up, the crowd waiting outside told us that the old lady who owned the place had got tired of waiting, so she locked the place up and went home. We were so pissed off. We had driven non-stop from Philadelphia to get to Cleveland in time, and the hag couldn't wait for ten fucking minutes.

Daniel: We felt, "This is just fucked, we're out of here." Then, Shaun from Annihilation Time/Knife Fight told us that we all could play a basement show, so we went to set up the show there. Since Shaun was in Gordon Solie Motherfuckers and Tony Erba was hanging out as well, we asked them if there was a possibility to make The Solies do a one-off show that night, just for fun. They talked about it for a few minutes, talked with the other guys in GSMF, sound checked for about fifteen minutes and did a show that blew our brains out.

Per T: The next day, the word was out on all the chat rooms on the Internet: "Did you know that Gordon Solie Motherfuckers played in Cleveland last night?" The Cleveland show was one of our best shows on the whole tour. We poured all our frustration over the events with the venue into the set and really ripped it up. Vivisick was awesome that night too.

MRR: Your line-up has changed over the years. Christoffer and Per are the new kids on the block. How did you two wind up in Bruce Banner?

Christoffer: I joined Bruce Banner in November 2003 when I moved from Umeå to Stockholm. I had spoken to Per a couple of weeks before and we started to rehearse pretty much immediately.

Per T: We had been without a second vocalist since our Sweden dates with What Happens Next? in June that same year, and it was difficult to find someone that fit in. When I heard that Christoffer was moving to Stockholm, I called him up and asked if he was interested to join the band, and luckily enough, he was.

Christoffer: At first, I was a bit sceptical about being a singer. The other guys showed complete confidence in me though, and it all worked out just fine.

Per H: I've been in Bruce Banner about four months now. Daniel asked me if I was interested in playing drums, and I thought it could be fun to try it out. We did two or three rehearsals and it clicked pretty much right away.

MRR: What happened to Petter Barnevik, your original drummer?

Per T: Well, that's a good question, actually. Basically, I think that he just got tired of playing hardcore. He didn't enjoy touring. He felt that it was better for all of us if he left the band before the US tour instead of doing thirty shows and not being dedicated at all.

MRR: Do you think family matters or job obligations had something to do with him quitting the band?

Christoffer: I don't think so. As far as I know he went back to school.

MRR: Do you still keep in touch with him?

Christoffer: I've only met him one or two times since he left the band. I know he saw us when we were playing at a party last summer, but I don't know what he thought about it.

Per T: I think he liked it, but he must have felt that it was strange

CHRISTOFFER
LIVE AT THE SMELL
LOS ANGELES

to stand in the audience as a spectator and not being a part of the band any more.

MRR: When listening to your latest album I've Had It W/Humanity, I feel it's straighter and more to the point than the seven inches. Do you agree?

Christoffer: I think it's a pretty natural development. At least I feel that the sound has evolved since I joined the band. It's not as technical as it used to be—it's much more straight forward hardcore with a raw punk edge, the kind of music I like to play the best. In my opinion, I think we've managed to create a good mixture of all the standard influences that every fast hardcore band in the world refers to.

Per T: Well, naturally it's a big difference between the record and how we sounded in the beginning when we used samplers and keyboards. It's much more punk and old school hardcore than before.

Per H: It's less grindcore, but more chaotic.

Christoffer: Above all, we've managed to write really catchy tunes. To write memorable songs is the objective in any kind of music genre, and even though our stuff is fast and brutal it's easy to sing along to the songs.

Per T: I think so too. It's easier to remember the songs on the record than those on the seven inches, because this time we've had killer production. We recorded the album in April 2004, and I can still listen to it and feel that it's solid. The production is absolutely flawless.

MRR: Your original idea was to release singles only, wasn't it?

Per T: That's right. The plan was to release four singles a year, but concept fell apart pretty soon. We only managed to release two singles in 2001, our debut *I Love Fucked Up Noise* and a split with Sayyadina. We realized that if we were going to do a serious tour in the future, we had to have a proper full length under our belts.

Christoffer: The seven inch is the ideal format for hardcore and punk music, but if you're a bit lazy as I am it's damn tedious to flip the record over every two minutes.

Per T: A hardcore record is seldom any longer than twenty-five minutes anyway. It's not like usual rock bands whose records stretch for over an hour.

Per H: It's impossible to sit through an hour of intense hardcore. It's way too much.

Christoffer: Poison Idea is the only band that can put out a record that is longer than half an hour and still be fucking geniuses. I don't think we're quite there yet.

MRR: Regarding the development from the seven inches to the album, how can we expect Bruce Banner to sound in the future?

Christoffer: We have written and rehearsed three new songs. It sounds like the material on the record, but with an even bigger punk influence. We've eased up on the full-on thrash madness a tiny bit. Maybe it's a little less manic than before, but it's still punk as fuck.

MRR: What are your thoughts on current Swedish hardcore?

Christoffer: There aren't any good hardcore bands in Sweden right now. I like Regulations, which I think is the best punk band in Sweden and in contrast to my fellow band mates, I also like Randy. Skitkids and Baboon Show, a really good punk rock outfit from Stockholm, are also good but besides that, I don't know.

Per T: I like Widespread Bloodshed and Abductee S.D. Bad News from Stockholm is also great.

MRR: Aren't there any good domestic outfits with new ideas and fresh perspectives on hardcore?

Christoffer: Hardcore isn't about having an open mind or embracing innovation. It's about trying to do something personal with an old formula. Regulations are a good example of what I'm talking about. They do nothing but rip off Germs and early Black Flag, but they do it with style. There are also a shitload of Swedish bands who want to sound like Tragedy. It's unbelievably boring. Ambulance from Umeå is OK as they try to do something personal, but they're not original in any way.

Per H: I'm fed up with all these bands who try to be so serious and miserable all the fucking time. They put on an act to get to play in certain bands or to get some credibility in the scene. It's really sucks to see a show if the band is all depressed and negative. I mean, after a while you get depressed yourself.

There are few things that annoy me more than watching a band that doesn't seem to like playing live. If they don't think it's fun, they can't expect anyone to think otherwise. If they don't think it is fun to play, maybe they should start collecting stamps or something instead.

Christoffer: There are few things that annoy me more than watching a band that doesn't seem to like playing live. If they don't think it's fun, they can't expect anyone to think otherwise. If they don't think it is fun to play, maybe they should start collecting stamps or something instead.

MRR: In a larger perspective, do you think the European hardcore scene holds its ground against its American and Japanese counterparts?

Per T: Of course there are good European bands, but not as many as it used to be.

Christoffer: Personally, I've always been more interested in the American hardcore scene. As for Europe, I don't have a clue. I really liked Amdi Petersens Armé and Young Wasteners from Denmark, but they've both split up. The same goes for that Italian band whose name I never can pronounce correctly…

Per T: L'Amico Di Martucci.

Christoffer: That's right. They were awesome too, but they're not around anymore.

Daniel: There are a couple of good bands from The Netherlands like Seein' Red and Betercore.

MRR: Dead Stop from Belgium is really good.

Daniel: Dead Stop? I've never heard of them.

MRR: They released an album on Deranged last year, Done With You. Worth checking out.

Christoffer: Dead Stop sound a lot like Negative Approach and early SSD. Speaking of SSD, I must say that *How We Rock* is a kick-ass record!

Per T and Daniel: OK, next question please!

Christoffer: No honestly, I really love it! I have to bust the myth that it's a bad album. I mean, it so good. It's hardcore kids playing AC/DC-styled rock'n'roll with a hardcore production. It's the best party record of all times, and I'm not being sarcastic here. I'm totally serious.

MRR: So, what is 2005 going to hold for Bruce Banner?

Christoffer: Our first priority is to write new material. Inspiration is slow at the moment, but it's gradually progressing.

Per T: I want Dan Seagrave to do the artwork for our next album.

Per H: Or Derek Riggs, perhaps?

Per T: Dan Seagrave has a website. Maybe we can steal something off it…No, but seriously, we're going to try and do a short tour in England later this year and maybe a larger one in Europe. It all depends on how the song writing process develops.

MRR: Christoffer, you were involved in a short-lived side project called Suicide Blitz that released an album last year. (Ride The Steel, Hate Records). Do the members of Bruce Banner engage in any other musical endeavours?

Daniel: Not at the moment, no.

Christoffer: Suicide Blitz was a more or less successful one-off thing that may happen again. It all depends on whether Kelly (Severed Head Of State, Detestation, Defiance, etc) comes back to Sweden. Since I'm a bass player, I'd really like to play bass again but it remains to be seen if such an opportunity surfaces.

MRR: OK, do have any closing comments?

Christoffer: Buy our record or eat poo!

Per T: Please, if you got pics or videos from our US tour send it to us. Of course, we would buy or trade with something.

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Note: A few days after this interview was conducted, Lars Danielsson decided to quit the band. The new bassplayer is Malcolm Murdoch.

THE REAL LOSERS

These three rock 'n' roll idiots have been tearing a hole in the consciousness of kids starved of kicks around the globe since they first crawled out of their garage in the north of England a few years back. Their rep has been built on the back of a string of amazing singles and a debut album, the monumental *Time To Lose*, the best LP of 2003 by a country mile. Classic elements are thrown into the mix to make immaculate three-chord two-minute one-beat instant classics. Imagine if Teengenerate were the band in RocknRoll High School and you might be getting warm. They've injected some much needed fun, spunk and energy into a moribund UK punk rock scene. This interview was conducted in the Losermobile parked outside the epic Real Losers/Black Time showdown that took place in east London earlier on this year. As may be apparent to more astute readers, all participants were long gone beyond the edge of sobriety by the time the tape started rolling and questions were shot in between wrestling each other for a bottle of tequila. The Real Losers are Hot Dog (Floor Tom, Snare, Cymbal), The Hand (Guitar) and C-shake (Bass/Vox). Interview and indtroduction by Lemmy Caution.

MRR: Hot Dog, you have a unique style of down-beat-only drumming. Do you have to do any special kind of exercise to sustain the beat?
Hot Dog (HD): Wanking. I wank a lot.
C-Shake (CS): She has to release all her sexual tension on the drum kit.
HD: I also pretend they're people's heads.
MRR: Which particular people's heads?
HD: The children I work with.
The Hand (TH): Hot Dog works with retarded children and me & C-Shake work in a dog food factory.
MRR: If you could endorse any product what would you endorse?
CS: It would be a tool. It would be, er, a device that would encompass everything that anyone would ever want in their entire lives, so basically you'd switch it on and it'd stop you worrying or getting anxious about anything be it sexual problems or whatever.
MRR: That sounds like a great tool.
CS: Yeah, I'm working on it.
MRR: What's the catch line?
CS: It's gonna be like: "You Can Do It!"
TH: I'd endorse products such as Thomson's Water Seal. Have you ever seen the advert with that in it? The guy just goes: "If you don't do your fucking DIY with Thomson's Waterseal, there's something wrong with yer!" You know, he's a total cunt. I'd have an advert that said: "That guy that used to the Thomson's Waterseal advert is a total wanker." And Chinese-made guitars. I'd advertise them on telly.
MRR: Hot Dog, what would you endorse?
HD: Sweets.
CS: Babies!
HD: Sweets and Babies. Jelly babies that you have to breastfeed.
CS: Lemmy, I thought you were a man of letters —these questions are shit! You're illiterate!
MRR: Fuck off! I told you I haven't been drinking for a month and then I started again tonight.
CS: Oh don't give us that old I stopped for a month, I started for a month, I can't control myself for a month blah blah blah.
MRR: It's true, I've got some problems. I don't wanna talk about it.
CS: Let's just talk about your issues—what is the problem?
MRR: It's about sin.
HD: Sin??!!
LC: Yeah, you're either sinning or you're chaste.
CS: But drinking's not a sin the Catholic Boys drink lots and they're men of the cloth!
MRR: OK, I have a serious question. Dude, where is your car?
TH: My car is fucking outside my house and shit.
MRR: No, but seriously dude, where is your car?
CS: My car's parked outside our hotel 'cause we're popstars and drove to the show in our limousine.
MRR: So what was touring the USA like then, hotshots?
TH: Fucking hell. ?It was like we started drinking and didn't stop for two weeks. We were with the Catholic Boys who were the best band you could ever tour with.
MRR: Tell me a Catholic Boys story.
CS: I sniffed Paul Reject's arsehole by sticking my finger up his bumcrack and sniffing it. And he sniffed mine as well.
HD: He liked it!
TH: The best thing about the Catholic Boys is that they just seemed like they were completely out of control all the fucking time.
CS: They said it was the soberest tour they'd ever been on too! They're seriously young compared to us—we're like twice their age!
MRR: How old are you???!!!
CS: I'm approaching 65 this autumn.
TH: I'm approaching 70 this week.
HD: I'm 18.
MRR: How old are the Catholic Boys?
TH: Twelve.
CS: One of them is nine. They're all retarded. They're absolutely stupid. There's a reason for the Catholic Boys, and the reason is Milwaukee. It's the most boring place on earth.
MRR: Do you think there's a UK garage renaissance at the moment?
Everyone: *What???!!!!*
MRR: Well, you know like for ages there was just Billy Childish and…
CS: *Boring*!! The guy bores me senseless. I'm sick of this comparison all English bands get with Billy Childish. I think he's the worst fucking guy in the world. I've never managed to listen to one of his records all the way through. I know some people think he's a genius or whatever but he's just a boring fucking guy. And like, I'm a boring guy, but I don't listen to Billy Childish and that makes me a 100 million times better than Billy Childish.
MRR: So what do you listen to?
CS: At the moment I'm absolutely going nuts for Little Richard. He's a raving queen with a nice little trimmed moustache, a fucking pompadour and he just hollers!
MRR: Have you seen the Girl Can't Help It?
CS: No, I've not seen nothing, I've not listened to nothing. It's all instinct. It's down to primeval urges.
MRR: Is it in your twisting hips?
CS: It's not in me hips.
MRR: Is it in your kissing lips?
CS: It's in me piles! They vibrate and I can't stop moving. When those fuckers itch I've gotta go for it.
HD: That's true.
MRR: The Hand, what are you listening to at the moment?
TH: The Spits and the Oblivians.
CS: There's a handful of bands that we consider like our swamis or something. Like the Flakes—they're like teachers and preachers and they hand down knowledge, and we've got a thirst for knowledge. We've learnt from the Flakes and the Catholic Boys!
TH: And the Hot Pockets!!!
MRR: I think the Real Losers make perfect songs to be played on the radio. When's it gonna happen?
CS: Yeah! I think we can do it. The thing is, people think about it too much. Our thing is: we don't think about what we do, we just do it.
MRR: Are you pleased with all the press you've been getting? Everyone seems to love the Losers!
CS: I don't read any magazines, there's too many words in it. You know what sells it for me for a good article? A really fucked-up good picture. If the band looks stupid and dumb and rock 'n' roll then I'm sold.
[Eric Ulcer enters the van, French ex-pat and big cheese on the English rock 'n' roll scene due to his gig promotion and drumming in hundreds of bands, including the Ulcers, the Parkinsons and Ramones tribute act the 53rd & 3rd]
Eric Ulcer (EU): I have to say, one of the more beautiful houses I have been to is the Real Losers house. Really soft toilet paper.
TH: We aim to please.
CS: Ask us another question.
MRR: I don't have anymore questions.
EU: What is this interview for?
MRR: *Maximum Rock 'n' Roll.*
EU: Ah fuck, you are gonna have to do it all over again. You are all too drunk.

The Real Losers new LP *Music For Funsters* is out on Trick Knee/Alien Snatch.
Check out www.btinternet.com/~drchapman/losers/ for further madness!

LOVE SONGS

Yeah, the band LOVE SONGS plays a lot of love songs, but don't let their wussy facade fool ya. While singer Craigums' lyrics wittily capture the bittersweet, ironic and absurd qualities of love-gone-bad, other Love Songs themes include the follies of shaving your privates, smoking, and *gasp!*—even "the system"—always from Craigums' quirky but insightful point of view. A typical LOVE SONGS song meanders from one genre to the next—a sissy, poppy ballad one minute to a raging circle-pit tempo the next minute to a full-blown tango the half-minute right after that, and all somehow impregnated with hooks. But it's not the eccentric mish-mash of jams you'd expect from a bad high school garage band that can't make up their minds on what sort of band they wanna be–it's more like a college drop-out version of that. More nicely put, their songs are a collection of short-attention-span riffs played both with and without a distortion pedal. Live performances are loud, tight, and energetic. In this day of polarized politics/music, LOVE SONGS is all over the map without losing any appeal.

INTERVIEW WITH CRAIGUMS BY MIC MUCUS.

Craigums: Geez, Mic! After reading that intro, I have to ask when you found the time to attend the School Of Rock Journalism?

MRR: I never did too much skooling or reedin' and ritein'. I learned everything I know from reading the nutritional information on the various beverage containers that dominated my universe.

Craigums: Don't get me wrong, I do appreciate the "loud" comment. I agree, we are loud. Full stacks and all. Matty Luv taught me the value of being too loud. Now that I think of it—in reference to you calling us tight—Matty also told me, "Your band is too tight and your pants are too loose to fully Rock." That's always kept me humble. I have another question for you; one of your current bands—THE MAGICOOL DOODS—has the lyric "I'm hung like a baby...nine pounds eight ounces." What keeps *you* so humble?

MRR: I did not write the passage in question. Upside Dan (who did write it) has never hesitated to expound on the virtues of his member while I remain uncomfortably silent. I am humble by default on two vistas. 1. Compared to Dan. 2. Lacking any appreciable talent. So, Craig, you've been doing this music thing a long time now, why aren't you better at naming your bands?

Craigums: I thought I had finally redeemed myself when I joined ANAL MUCUS?! Speaking of, has your family ever embraced the fact that you sing for a band called ANAL MUCUS? Furthermore, have they come to terms with the fact that you're now 33 and still singing for a band called ANAL MUCUS?

MRR: My family has grown to be proud of ANAL MUCUS and other bands I've been in (though they rarely attend any functions). At first they kinda just sighed and figured we'd grow out of it. After a few years weird shit started happening as the ANAL MUCUS spread. You know, my mom would be talking to her friends at work and it would come up that their friends' kid would be into us and then my mom would say, "Oh yeah my son is the singer for that band," all proud. A couple times I was with the toads, like, getting gas in Concord and some D&D/punk-looking guys would hit me up for tapes and autographs. My folks realized that ANAL MUCUS was just us having fun with our eccentricities and that others enjoyed it too. Nowadays ANAL MUCUS has become a Christmas time tradition. We play in Concord every X-mas night and three generations of Concord punks come and get wasted. For me it's one of the craziest and most heartwarming events of the year, right up there with Pin-a-GoGo (the annual pinball festival held in Dixon, California). *Anyway*...When I got the first LOVE SONGS cassette, I was under the impression that you played most of the instruments yourself. Yet, close inspection of your latest CD or a trip to a live performance reveals quite a different story. Were we fooled? Describe the transformation from the isolated musical savant to one that creates with others.

Craigums: That first cassette was just me keeping busy while YOUR MOTHER self-destructed and WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? kept me from entertaining my sissier sensibilities. For a few months I just noodled around on a four-track and got very self-indulgent. I had Bradley come over a couple times and play drums for a few songs but when my vegan vittles were gone so was he and I was forced to complete the rest on my own. Seven-minute MISFITS medleys are a direct result of me not having the better judgment of outside parties. But a couple years later Bradley moved back to the Bay Area—primed to play some sissy rock due to a soured relationship—and forced me to make LOVE SONGS a viable rock unit. We "auditioned" some dudes and both Seth and Jack rose to the top of the Best-Hair/Worst-Feet category. Billy Sheehan and Steve Vai they are not, but bona-fide dirtbags they are!

MRR: Does Love Songs have a mission statement, or any band rules that you must never break lest you never be love songed?

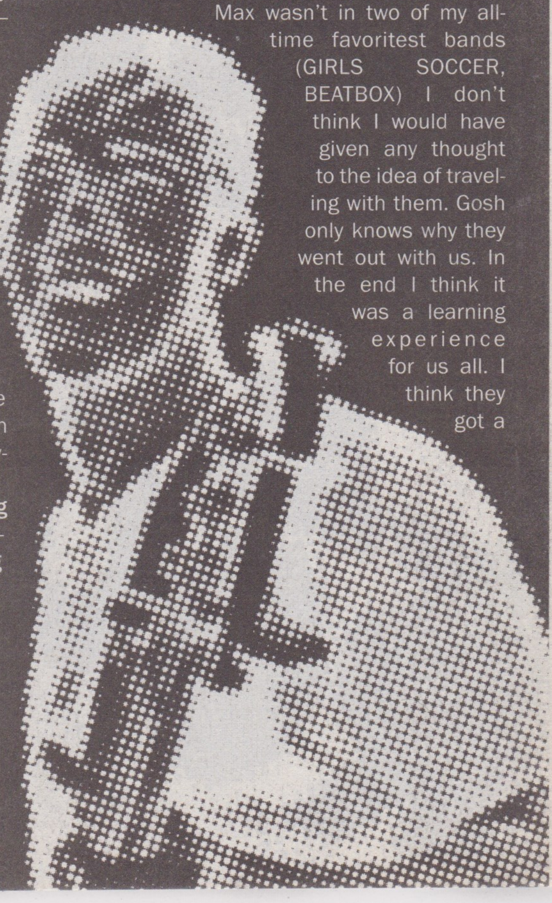
Craigums: First, Seth is never allowed to use his thumb while playing the bass. Second, everyone must shave their scrotums on November 15th. Third, no shoes in the van loft. Fourth, no taking your shoes off unless you're going into the van loft. Fifth, Seth is not even allowed to *pretend* to use his thumb while playing bass.

MRR: Speaking of the van loft, while touring you've often stopped by my place to borrow anti-fungal spray, baby powder, etc. Does playing music trigger bad hygiene habits or are people with a poor regimen more likely to rock? (Though I must say, Bradley always seems impeccably clean.)

Craigums: True, Bradley (the only one of us to have a "corporate" job) is almost always spotless, which leads me to wonder if well-manicured people get classier jobs or if classy employers hire only well-maintained people? But the subject of Seth and Jack's feet...um, I don't think it can be solved without the aid of the Discovery Channel or *CSI*. So to answer your question I'd have to say that rock music breeds rotten hygiene. But wait, the reverse holds true as well. For instance, we played an acoustic set with THE FLESHIES (who can be even louder than us sometimes!) and for the occasion we showered and donned sweater vests, probably because we knew we weren't going to rock very hard (though we did lite-rock pretty hard). So yeah, hard rock equals pungent stench, lite rock equals pleasant scent.

MRR: Though both bands have a certain pop element, LOVE SONGS and HIGH SPEED SCENE seem like unlikely touring buddies. How did shows you played with them compare to more traditional "punk" shows?

Craigums: Most of the shows we played with them were on the DIY level so I think they walked away with more out-of-their-element experiences than we did. For instance: HIGH SPEED SCENE playing in Bug's bedroom in Boise while drunk lumberjacks and backwoods hillbillies (Idaho's standard fare) sullied up the place—that was probably a little different than their tours with N.E.R.D. or JIMMY EAT WORLD. But then I have a feeling that the record store we played in the far recesses of Idaho (where only six people watched with interest and another six—the employees—watched disgruntledly) was probably a shared middle ground. I think most bands can relate to playing for nobody or to playing for nobody who cares. We both bonded on failure and that's a bond that can't be meddled with. If Max wasn't in two of my all-time favoritest bands (GIRLS SOCCER, BEATBOX) I don't think I would have given any thought to the idea of traveling with them. Gosh only knows why they went out with us. In the end I think it was a learning experience for us all. I think they got a



clearer sense of what they were striving to outgrow and we got a clearer sense of how stupidly unprofessional we are.

MRR: Inside the jacket of your CD *All Branches, No Trunk* there's a drawing of a hand taking a cloth off a bicycle. What's that gotta do with Mr. Ruptured Sharp?

Craigums: Hey buddy, that bicycle is my ex-girlfriend!

MRR: Lets play a little word association game. I'll say a word and you say the first thought that comes into your mind: *Douglass*

Craigums: Adding another 's' to Douglas just makes the name so much better...Dougl-ass. Perfect!

MRR: Fresno

Craigums: I was in a movie with Ron Jeremy and Lemmy called *Frezno Smooth*.

MRR: Nuts.

Craigums: Two eggs and a razor.

MRR: Champagne.

Craigums: Jack's nuts

MRR: Home lawn.

Craigums: How do you, Mic, justify paying the neighborhood kids $10/hr to pull weeds in your yard when you only make $8/hr at the recycling plant?

MRR: Just because paying an unlivable wage is legal doesn't make it moral. I read that on a fortune cookie once and it seemed right. Diarrhea ends and begins with the first bite of banana. etc.

Craigums: Okay, my turn. Mic, tell me the first thing(s) that come(s) to your mind: Conservative talk radio.

MRR: Good company, marijuana. AM radio sucks on the weekends and after 4 AM.

Craigums: Trampoline .

MRR: Jealousy, danger, not as rad as a pool.

Craigums: High-speed Internet.

MRR: Free music

Craigums: Let It Shit.

MRR: Awesome album by Italy's TAMPAX, but not as good as *Sorry Not Tonight*. TAMPAX is unmatched as far as radness.

Craigums: 4 AM.

MRR: The benchmark hour—crash or party on?

Craig: People named Boyd.

MRR: Boyd Mannion let my 9th grade punk band play on his front yard during a block party. We were electrocuted. He is an awesome man. Ok...What are some of the best places you've played on your travels? Any places you wouldn't expect to rock that did?

Craigums: Dude, Reno.

MRR: What are your criteria for booking shows? Is it realistic to decide to play only all-ages shows while on tour? Does it matter to LOVE SONGS?

Craigums: We're definitely all-ages-preferred, if only because our appeal rarely extends beyond your average fourteen year-old mentality, but we'll play pretty much anywhere, including bars. We usually use the bars as an outlet to do the songs about nut-shaving and eating feces enchiladas—you know, music that is in no way geared towards adults. The funny part is that bar audiences generally enjoy those songs more that your standard all-ages punk show attendees. I dunno...maybe it's hard for a fourteen year-old crusty, mohawked patch-punk to admit words like "poop" and "fart" and "nards" are meant to make them laugh. The other benefit of playing bars is that in order to sneak our under-aged friends in, they grab a piece of gear and walk in like they're in the band. 1) They get in, 2) they get in free and 3) we don't have to load anything ourselves. It's really a sweet arrangement. As far as being on tour, if it comes down to playing a bar show or no show at all we'll play the bar. A night off on tour only leads to trouble.

MRR: What about drinking/drugs while on tour? Any rule on that?

Craigums: Drugs are really a non-issue with us, and the drinking is pretty much limited to Jack and Seth, and usually only between the time when they wake up and when they go to sleep.

MRR: Are there future LOVE SONGS release in the works? Will you record it yourselves?

Craigums: There are always LOVE SONGS releases in the future. Now, whether or not anyone puts them out is another story...I have a studio in my house so when we get the occasional IRON MAIDEN or JUDAS PRIEST comparison it's because I have all the time in the world to come up with 45 different guitar harmonies.

MRR: It seems like you guys spend a lot of time on your web site. How do you decide the "Love Song Of The Month"? Do you guys all play on every song of the month or what?

Craigums: LOVE SONGS has a hard enough time learning our own songs without having to learn a new cover song every month, so the Love Song(s) Of The Month are all me. I started doing them so I could practice using my four-track but 25 songs later they've just become a distraction and a burden. But hey, free music!

MRR: Craigums, have you considered changing your own name to "Love Songs," kinda like "Human Rights" or "The Edge" (who are much cooler than "Sting" or "Sade" for sure)?

Craigums: In the case of HR and The Edge, they already had the names before using them as band names. I would have had to already be called Love Songs. But rest assured that when I change my name to Boofums PoochCrocket, a band of the same name will follow.

MRR: Every band has at least one friend or fan who loves them so much it seems irrational. Who is LOVE SONGS' most devoted devotee? Expound on their idiosyncrasies and how they may have helped/hindered your schemes.

Craigums: We do have an irrationally staunch supporter and his name is Vinnie. Among other things, before he even knew us, he invited our whole band (and entourage) to his house for a home-cooked Italian feast one night after a show! The fact that none of us died from the evening's garlic-laden festivities has bumped Vinnie from "creepy nice guy" to "nice creepy guy."

MRR: What can someone who's never seen you expect at their first LOVE SONGS performance? What would you like them to take with them after the show?

Craigums: I like to see people smiling while we play. It means 1) they're paying attention and 2) they're entertained. So I'd say I want people to leave entertained, and if we're lucky, humming a song about shaving their nuts, and if we're very lucky, pouring champagne on Jack's nuts.

Love Songs
c/o Craigums
PO Box 623
Pleasanton CA 94566
www.thelovesongs.com

INTENT

INTENT IS A FANTASTIC BAND. THEIR MUSIC IS GREAT, THEIR LYRICS HAVE THINGS TO SAY THAT ARE WORTH LISTENING TO, AND LIVE THEY MIX THEIR SPEED AND POWER WITH A FUN SENSE OF HUMOUR. BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY, THEY ARE THE NICEST PEOPLE YOU COULD EVER HOPE TO MEET, BOTH INDIVIDUALLY AND COLLECTIVELY. IF THEY CAN HELP YOU OUT, THEY WILL, WHETHER BY SETTING UP A GIG SO YOUR BAND CAN PLAY IN SOUTHAMPTON, LENDING EQUIPMENT, OR JUST BEING THERE FOR YOU, SINGING ALONG TO YOUR SONGS, AND PROVIDING A ONE-BAND PIT. WHEN I REALISED THAT THEY WERE HAVING PROBLEMS GETTING THEIR ALBUM RELEASED I OFFERED TO DO IT WITHOUT HESITATION, IT SEEMED A SMALL WAY TO PAY THEM BACK FOR EVERYTHING THEY'D DONE, NOT JUST FOR US BUT FOR THE WHOLE LOCAL SCENE. IF EVER A BAND DESERVED TO BE EVERYONE'S FAVOURITE, INTENT IS THAT BAND. INTERVIEW BY TONY SUSPECT

MRR: OK, to start with, can you introduce yourselves please? Tell us how the band got together and give us a brief history to date.

Intent: Right. We're called INTENT and that is Stew on vocals, Mat on guitar, Paul on drums and Neil on bass. We are based in Southampton, England and started playing together about three years ago. Since then, we have done a bunch of gigs around the country, done a self-released EP, *Everyday*. We also now have an album out called *Double Positive* on Suspect Device Records, and we've made a lot of friends!

MRR: Would you say the band has changed over the three years, either in terms of your outlook and your music?

Intent: Obviously a great deal has changed in three years, but I think at our centre we are still basically the same band. We have grown together a lot but we still just want to have fun and make music. I think we have developed more of a sound of our own, though. Obviously we have influences and they can sometimes be bleedin' obvious but our songs are now quite obviously "us." It's cool because the songs are just things we want to play and we do it with no consideration for anyone else. Once we started gigging, though, we found ourselves in a situation where people wanted to hear us and were getting into the stuff that we were doing just for our own enjoyment...This is very satisfying. I find it does add an element of pressure though, not so much to the process of writing the music, but in playing gigs. We have to remind ourselves that it's no longer just about us, people could've chosen to do anything that evening but they chose to come out and pay to see us play so it's important to play well and make it an experience for everyone in the room.

Another important lesson I think we have all come to appreciate is that it's a great thing to be able to be in a band and be able to play your music to people. So I don't think any of us are as judgmental now—if a band can get up there and get into their music, then they ought to be applauded—even if they are not to your particular taste.

MRR: How difficult has it been since Mat moved to Brighton?

Intent: Mat went to Uni in Brighton in order to train in social work type stuff to make a positive impact on people's lives and to help those in society that need it. Obviously, the rest of us fully support the decisions Mat has made which enabled him to do this, even though it means that there are periods when he is obviously far too busy to invest the time to concentrate on the band, be it travelling back for practices/gigs or even sitting down to write and learn new songs. In many respects however, Mat moving to Brighton has helped us become more focused as a band. He initially suggested that we get another guitarist into the band, but we were all totally against that idea, because INTENT has always been about friendship (almost family) rather than a band, and to continue it without Mat wouldn't have made sense. We wanted to document all of the songs we had written to date so we arranged to go into the studio. Obviously it was these tracks that we ended up releasing as our album *Double Positive*. Also Mat has now got into the Brighton scene, so we've had the opportunity to play there a couple of times, which is awesome!

MRR: How come your *Double Positive* CD took so long to come out? Are you happy with the way it's turned out and with the reaction it's had so far? Does it annoy you that no one knows what the album is really called?

Intent: Haha. Welcome to the world of INTENT. When you have two blokes who can't make a decision, Mat in Brighton (I've just thought of a drawback to Mat being in Brighton!) and Stew who tries to be the firework for the rest of us, I am surprised we get anything done! We recorded the album in February 2004 and didn't get it all sorted to release until October. There were a couple of reasons for this, none of them being very convincing, so I won't bore you with all the details, but it involved trying to sort out all the usual minor details like the album design and also money. Just as we were deciding we couldn't afford to do it at all, Suspect Device came in and offered to release it for us—which was the best thing that could've happened, really. So, I guess no one is really to blame, it's just INTENT! Now that it's out though, we're really happy with it and have been blown away by how generous people have been about it. I mean, we sit around coming up with all these songs purely for our own enjoyment, so when people come along and say that they really dig what we are doing it's very special to us. As for the album name, it was called just plain *Double Positive*, but Stew's mate Bryn Williams who designed the packaging got all "arty" and did the reversed text thing. We thought it looked cool so it stayed. To be honest, I don't really think it matters too much, it's only a name and the music is more important.

MRR: The Launch gig for *Double Positive* was amazing; can you describe what it felt like to be playing in that sort of atmosphere, and to get that sort of reaction?

Intent: It was a very special night for all of us. We were surrounded by friends and also lots of people who we hadn't seen before, and everyone seemed to really enjoy themselves—especially us! It was great to see so many people singing along, the room was jumping and everyone just wanted to have fun. We had worked really hard on the album and as it had taken so long to get out, the whole gig felt like the culmination of a huge endeavour. Bring on the next launch gig!

MRR: What makes a good gig for you and what would you say has been your favourite so far?

Intent: I think a good gig is definitely a two-way experience between the band and the audience. I mean, if we don't play well, that's not good but also you definitely get a vibe off the audience and you can tell if they are getting into it or not. We all get more out of gigs when we know people are getting something out of it. For example, when the crowd is a bunch of ten to fourteen year olds, and you can see that they are enjoying themselves and experimenting with different styles of music (rather than the more commercial music on offer), it gives us an enormous sense of reward. We would rather play a hundred times at the Totton Youth Club than once at a packed arena. Though,

if someone wants to book us at Wembley (when it's built), give us a bit of notice because we have another 98 gigs at Totton to do first. As for a favourite gig, I'm not sure—playing at the Totton Youth Club is always special because kids are always so honest, not at all pretentious and there is an overriding desire to just have fun. We did a Halloween show there last year which was awesome because a couple of the kids from the club had formed a band and we got to play with them too—I think we were more excited about it than they were! Our *Double Positive* CD launch was also amazing—so many friends turned up and people helped us flyer the gig to hell (thanks Jim), so loads of new faces were there too.

MRR: Who writes the lyrics and what inspires them? What sort of subjects do your songs cover and is it important for you to have meaningful lyrics?

Intent: Mat and Stew pretty much split the lyric writing between them. Paul and I have started getting in on the act now though. We each wrote a verse for "Posi-Pit Crew" and I have written the lyrics to a new tune. For the uninitiated, it's fairly easy to tell Stew and Mat's lyrics apart: if they make some kind of sense, then Stew wrote them; if they make no sense or contain any references to dairy products, Mat wrote them. Seriously though, the lyrics have always been an important part of INTENT. We all have opinions and experiences, and the opportunity to express them is great chance for us all. We write over a broad group of subjects, from family and friends to society and politics to trying to make the best of living your life. I think that the world works at many levels and we would not want to get our heads stuck in one subject when there are so many to explore.

MRR: OK, let's pick out "Posi Pit Crew" seeing as you mentioned it. Can you tell us the background to this song?

Intent: This is by far the quickest song we have ever written! Stew went to go and get some food and by the time he got back we had written the entire song, lyrics and all! The song itself is generally about making a difference and getting involved, and for our part it's kind of a celebration of the great time we have being in a band and being a part of such an awesome scene here on the soutHCoast. For me personally , the song has its roots in a miserable December night in 2003… We've already mentioned the Totton Youth Club. Basically, Totton is a suburb of Southampton, and the Youth Club there is run by some really cool people who are trying to make a positive difference to the kids growing up there. You have to understand that a lot of these kids have been dealt some shit in life, they are from broken homes or have abusive parents, they're getting involved in drugs and drinking, under-age pregnancy, and some just terrorize the neighbourhood. Anyways, the Youth Club was set up as a kind of haven from all that—they have rules about no drinking, no drugs, no smoking, no abusive behaviour, etc., but basically they treat the kids like responsible people, they teach by example to show respect for others and it seems to have had a profound effect on both the kids and the community.

Anyways, a couple of years ago Tony Suspect organized a show there with some local bands to play for the kids. INTENT didn't play, but I went along and it was an incredible night. It started out with the larger guys fighting each other and then picking on the smaller kids, but by the end Phil from PILGER had them all doing Posi-Pit moves: walls of death, piggy-back fights, circle pits, even stage-diving off the sofas they had there. The best thing was that all the divisions had gone—all the kids wanted to be involved, so the big kids were carrying the smaller ones round, picking them up if they fell over and catching them when they jumped off the sofas; plus, it was a 50/50 split between boys and girls!! They all loved it and didn't want to go home afterwards. That night taught me a lot—it was the smallest amount of effort for the bands to play that evening and to put the gig on, yet it had such a massive impact. It demonstrates that people, and punk, can still make a difference and that it's important not to get to insular within a "scene," but to try and branch out because there are people out there who are receptive to it, but for whatever reason haven't had the opportunity or the know-how to get involved.

MRR: I would say that your enthusiasm and hard work as a band and as individuals have reinvigorated the local scene. What do you think is so good about the soutHCoast?

Intent: I dunno, thanks for that, but it is just because we love gigs and seeing loads of bands. We are lucky on the south coast because of the people down here and that is always the key. A soutHCoast gig is always an eclectic mix of styles, which is so cool. We are all pretty supportive of each other as well. Subjects like drinking and veganism do not get in the way of people's friendships as we've heard they can be in some places. We also have some great bands at the moment WITH JETS VS SHARKS, PILGER, CIRCUS ACT, HUMANS THE SIZE OF MICROPHONES, NO SUBSTANCE (I could go on…) and they are all very diverse, which is healthy. We also have people who step up to the mark in a bigger way: obviously Tony, Gaz and the rest of the crew who help out with Suspect Device, both on the zine front and with the Suspect Device Records side of things; Daz in Overton who is in numerous bands and also runs Cat n' Cakey Records, which is doing a great job of documenting a lot of our bands; Jim who has released a lot of bands and a great compilation (*Dirty Half Dozen*, which we are on!) on his Milliepeed Records; and the Oomf Collective who manage to put on a lot of the larger punk acts from the UK and the US, but who always stick good local bands on the bill to try and raise their profile.

MRR: How important is the DIY ethic to INTENT. Do you think that sticking to these principles has helped or hindered the band?

Intent: To start with, INTENT was about meeting up and jamming, so there was no intention to play gigs, or release CDs. Stew was already aware of the scene with his days in OLDER THAN DIRT, and also Mat and Neil were following bands such as JETS VS SHARKS. We were lucky enough to start being invited to play in the SCHC scene but didn't realize the full impact it would make on us until we started to get to know the people. When we play, we have no pretence that we are rock stars with yearnings for million-£ record deals—we just play because we enjoy it and if we can contribute in any way to try and help out other bands around us then that's all cool. We don't really see it as following a DIY ethic, it is just the label that is attached to the way that we, as a band, feel most comfortable in doing things and making any decisions with which we are confronted. Half the time we are just helping out mates if we can, and we would never dream of labelling that as anything other than friendship! I think a lot of people get bogged down in the whole ethos that is supposed to surround punk and punk communities, but it is important to analyse the individual rationale behind any ethics that you choose to adhere to. DIY, straight edge, veganism, etc. are all admirable pursuits, but if someone is doing it just to fit in with a group of people then it is something of an empty gesture. Punk can have a positive impact as long as it continues to raise these issues, if people then consider them and decide to make that change then that is awesome—but it should not be dictated or laid down as some rite of passage to an exclusive club. I don't think anything will ever hinder the band, because at the end of the day we do what we want to do and will always remain friends no matter what. If anything we now have an extended set of friends who help us out too, so we're still playing what we want to and we still can't take anything seriously, so we must be doing something right!

MRR: What are the immediate plans for INTENT? Do you have any specific long-term hopes or ambitions for what you want to achieve with the band?

Intent: Well, we are planning to try and get back into the studio shortly, as we are going to be doing a split 7" with our friends NO SUBSTANCE. We are also hoping to hit the road and play some gigs around the UK in the summer, and that's about as far in advance as we have ever planned! We are all just enjoying where we are as a band at the moment, we all still have a great time getting together when we can to play music—and that has always been the most important thing.

MRR: How can people contact you?

Neil: The best way is to come and say hi at a gig or something—or even better, invite us to play in your town!! It is face to face that you really get to meet people; we are all pretty approachable, though often a bit confused directly after we have played a set, haha. Otherwise, we can be found at www.intentband.com and we have mp3's and stuff on MySpace, www.myspace.com/intent so come and make friends with us and meet all our buddies from round here too! For those too lazy to venture out of their inbox, our e-mail address is intent@intentband.com and we also have a postal address for those Ted Kaczynskis among us…

Stew Watt, 61 Alfriston Gardens, Southampton, Hants SO19 8GB, UK

CRIME

Crime was a one-of-a-kind fracture in the space-time continuum of rock 'n' roll. A dark and nasty aberration on the face of mid-70s West Coast America, emerging from a subterranean San Francisco still vibrating to the Haight-Ashbury echoes of the hippie era. Infamous for issuing one of the first punk rock singles anywhere in the world (1976's "Hotwire My Heart"), Crime had the perfect image/sound/aesthetic symbiotic mindbomb primed and ready to explode years before the White Stripes gave the MTV2 editorial board a boner. Driving the local police force to apoplexy by donning regulation SFPD uniforms as band outfits (with *that* name), storming the stages of SF rock clubs to the blare of stolen cop car sirens, and playing a legendary show at San Quentin prison (footage of which depicts the rabid inmates waving Crime posters in the face of the disgruntled guards) was just the start. Self-titling themselves "San Francisco's First and Only Rock 'n' Roll Band" earned themselves a ban from the self-righteous local FM station KSAN and the derision of their contemporaries. They rehearsed in a run-down pool hall and released their own records long before any DIY culture existed. They even rejected terms like "punk" and "new wave," professing that they played a new visionary sound dubbed "Crime wave!" Everything about the band, from their logo to their poster art to their twin-guitar blitzkrieg, was the perfectly distilled essence of everything rock 'n' roll could and should be about.

I remember hearing John Peel playing "Hotwire My Heart" and "Murder By Guitar" back in the early 90s when it was bootlegged on a reissue single, my finger feverishly hitting the record button as this grinding, yelping, metallic wall of sound blared out of the radio. I was hooked. Sadly, Crime only released two singles in their life span (both impossible to track down unless you were lucky enough to stumble across one of the illegitimate pressings) and coming across further evidence of their genius proved elusive. A few years ago I chanced across a live album, *Hate Us or Love Us We Don't Give a Fuck*, featuring recordings of two early shows. Scanning the back sleeve I just knew that songs with titles like "Raw Rumble," "Terminal Boredom," and "Baby You're So Repulsive" couldn't be anything less than amazing; indeed a cursory spin on the Dansette revealed "Hotwire" was no mere fluke—these boys had a canon of scorching punk rock classics to back-up the drop-dead cool iconography.

Last year saw a flurry of Crime activity not witnessed since their heyday, with Swami Records reissue of the *San Francisco's Doomed* compilation (re-titled *San Francisco's Still Doomed* with two bonus tracks), the publication of Crime main man Johnny Strike's debut novel, *Ports of Hell*, and their first live appearance in over 20 years.

Crime's Johnny Strike interviewed by Lemmy Caution

(continued on next page)

CRIME

Is it true that you and Frankie were hoodlums on the lam from Pittsburgh when Crime started?

You mean Philly. No, we were not. But let's back up here. In my early teenage years I was labeled "incorrigible" by the authorities, and from there on out was on probation, and in and out of detention centers. I was actually born in Philly but grew up in Harrisburg. When I met Frankie I'd gone straight and our common interest was rhythm 'n' blues and girls. We had all the latest records, went to all the shows, and knew all the dances. We actually went to Philly together a few times and had some adventures there. Eventually Frankie moved with his mother and brother to Napa, California, and I fell in with a group of old beatniks, lunatic hippies and bikers. I got arrested for possession of pot and ended up back in jail. I was placed on "special probation," and thereafter was hassled by some dick probation officer. When I finally decided to skip town I was in hiding, since he wanted to put me in reform school for a spell. I decided that I too would head for the promised land.

Even more so than most bands it's applied to, there seems to be a real gang mentality about Crime. Was this the case in real life or part of the image you were trying to project?

If we were a real gang then it sure was a strange one. We loved the whole gang theme from "The Wild One" to the droogs in "A Clockwork Orange." But most bands are a kind of gang anyhow—musical gangs.

There seems to be an amazing symbiosis between the name, the clothes, the stage show, the song titles etc. Did you come up with a lot of the ideas before it was a band or did everything just fall into place?

It evolved. First we copied the English mods like the Kinks and the Stones, then we transformed into glamsters. Frankie looked like Marc Bolan at one time and Lou Reed later. I was a Bowie clone and then more like Bryan Ferry. In '75 we stripped that down to basic black, greaser type look when we were known as the Invaders (shortened from the Space Invaders). The JD thing went through a sort of rockabilly phase and then gangster, and then we turned that on its head with the police uniforms. We considered everything to be of importance, from how we appeared in public, to our sound, lyrics, titles, posters, and so on.

The lo-fi/raw nature of the recordings on *San Francisco's Still Doomed* seems to capture the Crime spirit perfectly (to these ears anyway). Are you happy with the recordings all these years later, or would you have liked to have a shot at a big time studio?

We're happy with *Still Doomed*. The new mastering that Swami did added a needed dimension, and I think the two alternative cuts evened it out nicely. We did spend some time in a pretty nice studio once with mixed results. Those demos (maybe six or seven tunes) should be included in the Revenant box set. Early on, when Frankie and I got our first guitars, we both made stabs at lessons. We were both told that we played too noisily, but we liked noise, and so we quit the lessons right off and learned by playing together, constructing songs and developing our own sound.

Why was Crime so reviled in the local scene at the time?

Because we refused to play the San Francisco hippie-PC-trendy-punk game. Plus we enjoyed upsetting the apple cart. But remember there were a lot people that got it too. We mostly sold out shows.

What happened to the other guys in the original line-up?

Ricky Tractor died from drug-related problems early on, Frankie later, and Brittley even later. Ripper has a big potbelly now and sells antiques. By reforming Crime , Hank and I are fighting off any midlife crisis demons that may be lurking about. Hank is known as the Robert Evans of the indie film world. His latest production, a documentary about Daniel Johnston, has been accepted into the Sundance Film Festival.

How did the recent reformation show go? Where did you play, and what songs did you do?

It was great fun. We played the "Budget Rock Weekend," at a punk dive called Thee Parkside in SF. We were billed as "The Mystery Band," but the promoters kept dropping hints and word got out and the place was jumping by the time we took the stage. After not performing for twenty-plus years it was quite a thrill, and the audience was great. The sound was kind of shitty, but we kept it together; controlled chaos was always one of our specialties. We did "Murder by Guitar," "Lil' Sis," "Yeh Yeh Girl," "Across the USA," "Hate Train," "Piss on Your Dog," "Hang Around," "Into the Depths," "Hotwire My Heart," "Instrumental Instrumental," "Skunk," and "Clown Bitch."

Moving on to your book, *Ports of Hell* has a wide geographic setting. Did you go to a lot of the places to carry out research?

I went to them all: five months in Mexico (two different trips), three months in Thailand and a side trip to Sri Lanka.

"Ports of Hell" is a Burroughs reference isn't it? Didn't you get to meet him at some point?

It's actually a play on "ports of call." But yeah, Burroughs is an enormous inspiration. I took a two-week class with him at Naropa Institute in Boulder, Colorado one summer and then had some correspondence with him. Now some may say, "Oh Burroughs, gee, got anymore sacred cows and flogged horses?" but you know, if you could then ask these folks what they had to offer themselves, or even only to name anything that comes remotely close to *Naked Lunch*, or *Place of Dead Roads* for that matter, then they wouldn't have much to say. Ballard called him "the model for all writers who believe in their own obsessions." Burroughs has influenced everything in the arts that's worth anything.

Aside from Burroughs, the book straddles a lot of different genres such as pulp noir, sci-fi, magick etc. What were the main influences for you when writing?

I believe in the sci-fi of *1984*, *The Crystal World*, *Not of This Earth*, and *Alphaville*. For a while pulp noir was all that I'd read. I'm a complete David Goodis fanatic. I love good fantastic and exotic writing that produces a psychological realism: from Paul Bowles to Alergon Blackwood to occult material, surrealist novels and obscure adventure books– books that transport you, sometimes even to unexplored psychic areas. I was lucky enough to meet Paul Bowles too, one summer in Tangier.

Drugs run through the book as a kind of subtext–was this a conscious theme?

Reviews have said this too, but I consciously tried to keep it down to a minimum regarding drugs and drug use. But these characters start acting out on their own, and I can't stop them; I can only record it.

Are any of the characters based on real people?

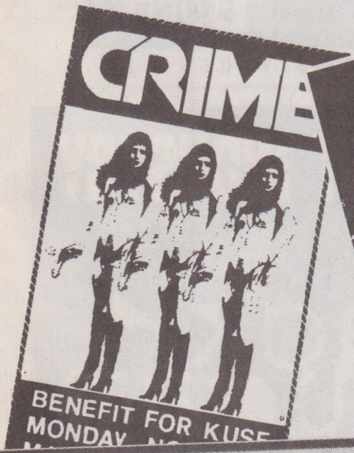
Yes and no.

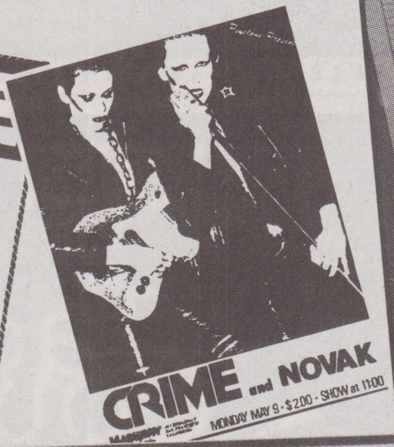
Finally, what are your plans for the future: Crime-wise, or in terms of future writings?

I've completed a second novel, *Curse of the Djinn*, which takes place mostly in Tangier. I've also completed a short story collection. I'm about to take off to Mexico again and try and get another book started.

Crime have confirmed to play a punk festival in Rome in late May. Other shows in Europe may develop around that time. We plan on doing a west coast mini-tour in the spring and some recording for Swami: a new album, and an EP of some Crime standards.

Check out Crime's web-shite:
www.crimewave.biz





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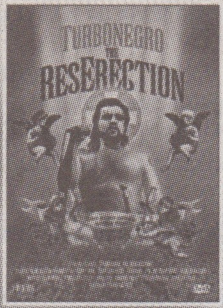

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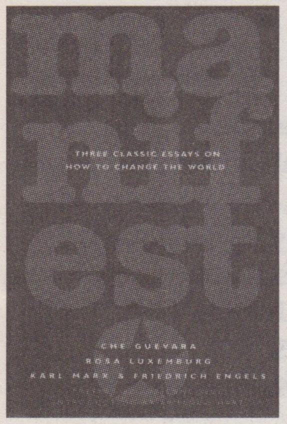


Manifesto: Three Classic Essays on How to Change the World
Che Guevara, Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels
178 pages • $15.95
Ocean Books
GPO Box 3279
Melbourne, Victoria 3001
Australia

I'd love to pen some clever little quip for the publishers of *Manifesto* to use on the back covers of future editions; something to the tune of "makes the perfect stocking stuffer for the armchair Marxist in your family!" or "like a mini-revolution in your back pocket!"

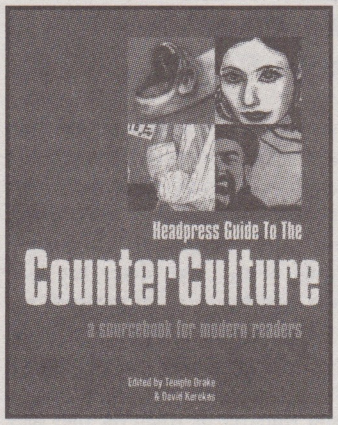
But seriously, folks.

Manifesto: Three Classic Essays on How to Change the World provides exactly what it says. To an extent. At least, as long as your world-changing activities fall within a Marxist/Communist/Social Democratic framework; which, to be fair, I suppose most people's actually do in this day in age. Compiling Marx and Engel's *The Communist Manifesto*, Rosa Luxemburg's "Reform or Revolution," and Ernesto "Che" Guevara's "Socialism and Man in Cuba," the book arrives just too late to relish the Guevaramania surrounding the release of the motion picture adaptation of *The Motorcycle Diaries*, but actually earns its stripes as a somewhat-disposable-but-still-rather-convenient volume. *The Communist Manifesto* needs no introduction...except for maybe the numerous introductions that seem to come standard with its other published editions. These supplementary texts are far from necessary, but the additional writings (most penned by Engels for subsequent editions and translations of the manifesto after Marx's death) do give welcome perspective and historical context for a document whose reputation somewhat dauntingly precedes it. Their absence from *Manifesto* remains notable, but far from crippling. Luxemburg "contributes" (quotes used because, well, she really didn't have any say in the matter) her 1899 response to Eduard Bernstein's revisionist critique of Marx "Problems of Socialism," and provides a welcome counter to those who would try to make socialist ideas complicit with capitalism. Finally, Guevara is represented by his 1965 letter to a magazine editor, composed while representing the Cuban government on a trip through Africa, in which he struggles to assert the prominence of the individual in a practical collective form of governance, specifically Castro's Cuba. As a whole, the three essays do give an effective and somewhat tangible conception of the trajectory of Marxism from the nineteenth and into the twentieth century.

The works receive opening notes by scholar Adrienne Rich and former Cuban minister of education Armando Hart. Rich's preface sagely introduces the lives and works of this volume's three main contributors, and draws attention to the pieces' relevance as "urgent conversations from the past that are still being carried on, among new voices, throughout the world." Hart, on the other hand, provides a harrowing glimpse of that evangelical side of socialism that sneaks its way into political discourse from time to time. Promising that "those who, like Fidel, study [*The Communist Manifesto*] and learn from its teachings, and at the same time embrace the cause of the poor, will find the path to revolution." Against the counterpoint of Rich's measured scholarship, this kind of rhetoric sounds almost biblical in its execution. There's no arguing with someone who claims they have *the* path to revolution. It's this kind of language that at times perverts *Manifesto*'s status as academic introduction to the enactment of social change into some sort of party pamphlet. His attempts to cover his tracks by asserting that "those who interpreted Marx and Engels' works as irrefutable dogma...made them into lifeless texts remote from reality" seem calculated, and are difficult to take seriously given the surrounding language of his introduction.

Hart's occasionally (or perhaps often) dogmatic stance should not, however, discourage the newcomer from picking up this collection. Seasoned Marxists will have perhaps encountered all of these texts before at one time or another, but then again, the book doesn't necessarily exist for seasoned Marxists. Instead, it seems designed as a primer course for those disgusted with crimes of abridgement and oversimplified argument summation (as are readily available in numerous, slim little volumes with inviting titles like "Introducing Marx" or "Understanding Marx," some of which even have pictures!), but perhaps not quite ready to delve into the (approximately) bajillion pages of *Das Kapital*. As an introduction into the world of Marxism, I can think of no better place to start than with the texts themselves in their entirety, and *Manifesto* does, indeed, offer good content for a reasonably good price.

— Max Tremblay



Headpress Guide to the CounterCulture: *A Sourcebook for Modern Readers*
Temple Drake and David Kerekes, editors
224 Pages • $19.95
Critical Vision:
An Imprint of Headpress
40 Rossall Avenue, Radcliffe
Manchester, M26 1JD, UK

Headpress Guide to the CounterCulture is an overview of books and zines published over the last several years by various small presses, and reviewed by Headpress, itself a small press.

It's by no means exhaustive: the section of the book that covers zines and periodicals runs a scant 36 pages. The selections chosen for review are eclectic, but tend to cover the sort of material that was really popular in the late 80s and early 90s and was covered to death by RE/Search Publications and their ilk: fringe fiction, weird crime, obscure music, and exploitation cinema.

The reviews are basically pretty on target, with a few exceptions that made me do a bit of a double take. For instance, in a review of a *The Portable Henry Rollins*, reviewer Simon Collins writes, "His first band, Black Flag, despite

enjoying massive cult status now, were frankly mediocre, no better or worse than a hundred other hardcore bands".

In that review, Collins shows that (a) he doesn't know that Black Flag was not Rollins' first band, (b) he probably didn't know about the three other singers that came before, and (c) he has no appreciation for Black Flag.

Now, I understand that the second point was mere conjecture, and in the third, it was merely a difference of opinion, but fuck! Black Flag was no better or worse than a hundred other hardcore bands? No, no, and fucking no.

Another problem I had with the book was the editors' choice of graphics and layout. If I was reviewing a book on the history of burlap, or the evolution of twine, I would expect layouts like this, but not with the fascinating material that composes the world of small presses. Furthermore, I am not swayed by the fact that Headpress is a small press. Thousands of zinemakers around the world have done better, and continue to do so.

So, I am left asking myself: Who exactly is this book for? I mean, despite all of my bellyaching, the fact remains that some pretty awesome stuff is reviewed here. I'd like to tell everyone I know to check it out, but Charles Bukowski? Daniel Clowes?

I think most everyone I know already has.

So, I'm left asking myself: Who would most benefit from this book?

I think that *Headpress Guide to the CounterCulture* would best be used as a sort of primer, a starting point (among other texts, perhaps) for young students in a sort of "introduction to small presses and publications" class. Otherwise, this book is deserving of a look over at the local library, but not much more.

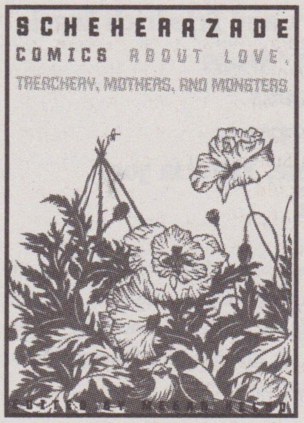
—Andy Shoup

Baraka And Black Magic In Morocco: A Graphic Travelogue
Rick Smith
104 pages • $14.95
Alternative Comics
503 NW 37th Ave.
Gainesville, FL 32609

Travelogues to remote locales in the Arab world have a fairly extensive tradition in English-language literature. From the travels of T.E. Lawrence (immortalized in cinematic form as *Lawrence of Arabia*) to more recent travel writing by Eric Hansen and Timothy MacKintosh Smith, the exoticizing of the Arab other has long intrigued American and European travelers. Certainly, a lot of this stuff has dodgy Orientalist overtones, but a lot of it can be fairly interesting and illustrative as well. When well written, travel writing can capture the unique quality of being an outsider among insiders in a far-off place by depicting specific interactions between the traveler and whoever or whatever they may encounter. That is, a good travelogue, while anecdotal, can teach us something about ourselves as well as about history, politics, and human interaction.

Unfortunately, this graphic travelogue by relatively well-known graphic artist Rick Smith falls pathetically short of the work done by the great travel writers that tread similar ground before him. Rather than providing insight into a culture alien from our own, or even insight into what it means to travel somewhere so far from home, this brief graphic novel is nothing but vignette after vignette of the author getting stoned, the author getting drunk, the author talking to his wife, and on and on. That's not to say that these things can't make a good story—we all know that they can. But these particular snapshots could've happened anywhere, to anyone. Even outside of the context of travel writing, they are pretty humdrum. In short, Smith doesn't give much depth to his story. The plot goes something like this: failed dot.com businessman is disillusioned with his life, so he and his wife go to Morocco, where they hang out and get fucked up while getting harassed by Moroccan street vendors. This goes on for over a hundred pages. Not much of a story, really. Unfortunately for Smith, the art doesn't really save this book either. It is competent—even well done—but incredibly simple and repetitive, so it doesn't offer much respite from the redundancy of the story. In general, I like simplicity in comic art but when coupled with as much of a non-story as this, it adds up to a pretty generic whole.

—Golnar Nikpour



Scheherazade: Comics about Love, Treachery, Mothers, and Monsters
Edited by Megan Kelso
223 pages,• $19.95
Soft Skull Press
71 Bond St.
New York, NY 11217

This anthology opens with a wonderfully paced and seductively told story, inspired by the book's namesake, with tales within tales, ingeniously drawn with elliptical precision. In it, a wife-beater clad fisherman confronts a genie, and after a lot of back and forth involving wise men, kings, executions, and parrots, all live happily ever after. This comic, by Andrice Arp, is one of the best of the collection, and also one of the few with a happy ending.

Scheherazade is an excellent collection of women's comics, by a few established and many emerging artists, edited by the incomparable Megan Kelso. Kelso has done a great job here, with an amazing range of graphic styles and levels of competence. In her lucid introduction, Kelso nails the issues inherent in making an "all women's" anything. "...Many still find themselves uncomfortably on display, much like the curious 'Lady Writer' of the early twentieth century, singled out for attention more for her gender than than the content of her work. This, admittedly, can make it difficult to argue for an artist's participation in a book that draws attention to her first as a woman..." Kelso goes on to make the case, however, for different but equal. She even provocatively suggests that "women construct comics narratives in fundamentally different ways than men." I don't agree with this essentialist viewpoint - this has been hashed out in writing, filmmaking, all the art forms, and I just don't buy it. BUT, I believe that men's comics have a lot of baggage and boring traditions that women comics just don't have (or at least, don't bother with), enabling us to be freer to make what we want, and that women artists have essentially reinvented the whole genre for the better.

Frequent references to *Twisted Sisters: A Collection of Bad Girl Art* (ed. Diane Noomin, 1991) in the introduction and cover quotes naturally invite comparison. Hmmmm...that's a tough one. *Scheherazade* features more contributors, and shorter pieces, generally speaking, than *TS*. This means more variety, both in style and in story form, which is good - but it also lets in some weaker pieces that wouldn't have made it into a tighter collection. And surprisingly, while the personal story is commonly more associated with fanzine punk rockers of the *Scheherazade* generation, this book contains fewer of those and more fantasy than *Twisted Sisters*. *TS*, for the uninformed, is an awesome book, featuring Julie Doucet, Carol Lay, Phoebe Gloeckner, Dori Seda, Aline Kominksy-Crumb, and Krystynne Kryttre. I have read it hundreds of times, xeroxed parts of it for dozens of friends, made certain references

from it part of my ongoing internal dialogue, and generally credited it with getting me started in fanzines and animation. Will Kelso's book have the same biblical proportion? Well, not for me, perhaps (how many times can an individual's life be altered by a women's comics anthology, anyways?), but certainly for many readers it will.

Some highlights are Ariel Bordeaux's sexy cartoon doggie-girls in "Bitchfest"; Sara Varon's wry Pygmalian story of a dog and his robot; Ariel Shrag's "Shit" and Amy Lockhart's "Timbits," two painful comics about loser girls and the pathetic strategies they devise to avoid being losers (it's hopeless, of course); Gabrielle Bell's haunting story of a trapped wife and her brush with freedom through widowhood. Nikki McClure (who makes those fantastic black and white cut out graphic calendars) does the cover, but unfortunately it's green, and unfortunately that's her only contribution. Ellen Forney and Robyn Chapman contribute delicate stories with strong, fat-lined graphics.

The best pieces are the ones that did, as editor Megan Kelso explains in her choice of Scheherazade as the book's role model, have a story that hooks you, pulls at you, and maybe even draws a little blood. The aforementioned Andrice Arp story is one, as is one of my favorites, Leela Corman's "Fanya Needs to Know." Corman's piece, a Lower East Side period piece about back alley abortion, is told through a nine or ten year old Fanya, who, with her sister, tries to ferret out the truth about the death of a neighbor lady. The drawings are chunky, inky, and perfectly suited to the grim overtones. It is grisly, but also hopeful, and rife with details (cut up fish, the butcher shop, grimacing babies) that evoke a young girl's burgeoning "body dread."

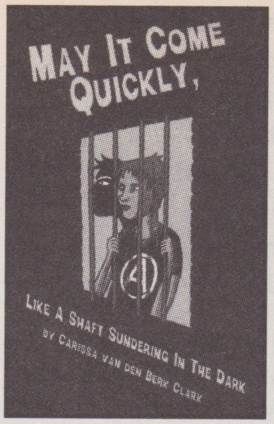
My other favorite was Megan Kelso's own comic, a sweet and (again) haunting story. Through the eyes of Frieda, the housekeeper, an elderly widowed woman makes arrangements to donate her husband's prized silver collection to a museum. The steely curator, the uncertain widow, the terse housekeeper - each is brought to life with Kelso's spartan and perfectly inflected dialogue, and open, uniformly-drawn images. There is room for gesture and nuance, as well as cleverly executed graphic device that wraps up the whole sad story. Amazing.

There are, however, some glaring problems with this book. Most disturbing is the poor print quality. I may be a comics snob, but I didn't like the purple ink. Yes, it's purple. It might be my bias, but I just would have preferred black and white. Worse than, though, the printing left some pieces virtually illegible. I mean, would I like to be Isabel Cavalho, author of "Berlinda's Taste," in which half of her characters were invisible? And no, it's clearly not on purpose. That piece was unreadable, and as a result, I didn't read it. Two or three others were compromised to a somewhat lesser degree, so I plowed through. It looks like the lower-contrast artwork was not prepared properly for the process. Artists using any gray tones were ripped off here, in my opinion. Not the fault of the editor, but a terrible shame anyway.

Story wise, there are some weak moments. This is inevitable in an anthology, and I won't go into it here - there were three or four comics that had a confusing end, or seemed pointless and unfinished. Not bad, out of 23 pieces. And chances are, someone less cynical than me would find the charm in these, as well.

This is a great book, and everyone should have it in their collections and pass it around. On thinking about the book overall, though, what's missing here...is...uh... *fun*. I guess it's a certain Goth feel that explains the lack of anything exhilarating or heady, or laugh-out-loud. As previously noted, the best stories are all very moody and haunting. The only really fun one, besides Bordeaux's wordless "Bitchfest," is Lauren Weinstein's great comic about rescuing a boyfriend (on acid) from himself. I would have liked to see something like Janelle Blargg!'s comics, something a little less weepy and introspective, in the interest of balance. Of course, that's assuming that "balance" is something that the editor is going for here, which I am not so sure she is. And I think I would trust her judgment on it better than mine.

—Greta S.



May It Come Quickly, Like A Shaft Sundering in the Dark
Carissa Van Den Berk Clark
192 pages • $12
Yellow City Publications
Eugeneandpenelope@ hotmail.com

Take any Political Science course after middle school and you soon realize that the most effective propaganda comes with a high amount of subtlety. To quote Biafra on the NoMeansNo team up, "The people must not realize they are being manipulated for them to be manipulated effectively."

Van Den Berk, with her tale of Young Anarchists in Love and Other Emotions, has no subtleties to speak of. In her novel concentrated mostly around two anarchist kids wrongly accused for a bombing, political beliefs come hard, fast, and swinging wildly, as if attached to a bat. The difficulty with this tactic is that you can't help but notice the person swinging.

The story revolves primarily around the life of Liberty, an anarchistic troublemaker whose only real crime is one of outdated sedition laws. After years of vocalizing her dissatisfaction with the United States, she finds herself targeted by shadowy government agencies. Circling around this plot point are a half-dozen loosely connected characters situated around the globe.

Set in a tangible future, we begin after a dossier of the bombing case and are then introduced to Alice, a FBI agent who begins to question the validity of her assignment. Alice is a good reference point to begin with discussing the problems with this novel, because when she internalizes her feelings about the case it is presented in such a matter-of-fact structure that there actually is no internal conflict. The right thing to do, in the way Van Den Berk presents it, is so painfully obvious that there is no reason to question it. And so she doesn't.

It's at this early point of the story that the lack of subtleties begins to manifest. Oppression, bigotry, government rule, classism and dozens of other ideologies formulate with years of experience, for good or for ill. To suggest that a person needs only a single moment of clarity to change years of conditioning is simply not believable. Thus the suspension of disbelief is shattered, and you begin to notice the person behind the curtain, namely Van Den Berk.

That curtain becomes more and more visible as the reader delves further into the book. Other characters are introduced, all of different ages, genders, classes, education levels, and races. Each of these characters has their spotlight moment, where they are afforded the chance to wax philosophical on the oppression that surrounds them. During this moment of two minute hate, one can't help but notice that they sound exactly like the *last* person afforded the space to rant.

In other words, you know their beliefs are coming from the author, and not from the subjects.

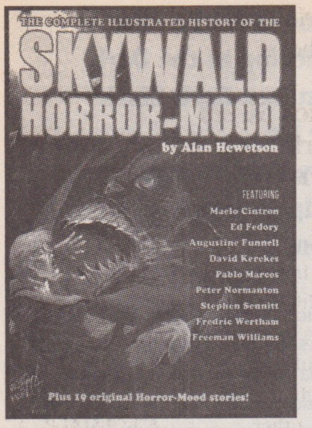
There are other problems, such as the anarchistic sense of syntax and spelling. When the redneck pro-American is directly quoted in dialogue using the word Womyn, the author's feelings on the matter of spelling and gender are made apparent. (Or apparynt, if you prefer.)

Social protest in novels is nothing new, but it works within the intricacies of the characters such as Steinbeck's Joad or Casy in *The Grapes of Wrath* or even Jurgis Rudkus from Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* in order to make the reader relate. Van Den Berk misses these refined points, and could stand to learn how to present a point of view that doesn't feel like it's being shoved down our throats.

There are good ideas in this book, and she has sense of story structure that may turn a voice of consciousness that catches on with the masses if she can control her feelings for the sake of narrative.

Which would present a problem of its own, but never mind.

—Dean Carrico



The Complete Illustrated History of the Skywald Horror Mood
Alan Hewetson
Headpress/ Critical Vision
P.O. Box 26
Manchester
M26 1 PQ, UK

A tour de force of Exuberant Fandom, *The Complete Illustrated History of the Skywald Horror Mood* dusts off and reignites the torch of 1970s infamous Horror comic-magazine publisher, Skywald Publications and their in-house style The "Horror Mood."

Through titles like *Psycho, Scream*, and *Nightmare*, Skywald cut a memorable blood-chilling swath through the glutted 70s black and white newsstand comic magazines market (think *Warren, Eerie, Creepy*, though it was a deluge of Marvel B&W titles entering the market that eventually bumped Skywald off the newsstand and out of existence). These Skywald titles were unique in their unpredictable path, twists and turns. A combination 1950s EC Horror tribute, Post 1960s/ Early 1970s freak-out, a pinch of Poe, a hint of Lovecraft's *Cthulu Mythos* (The company even ran an Anti-Shoggoth campaign in the 1970's!) and maybe even a Twilight Zone styled shock ending, but that's a retroactive critical assessment. The picture painted on the inside seems to show innovation at it's best—sets of ideas spun and crafted from a myriad of sources within the Writers Mind, then thrown against the wall in fun search of well done shocks and thrills—the "Primal Spinal "as they called it— all to be loving illustrated in European cartoon line style pen and ink or superbly inked stories in heavy blacks and washes by some of Spain and New York's finest cartoonists, from Bronze age heavy hitters like Pablo Marcos (who also painted this retrospective book's cover) and Gene Day to Ricardo Villamonte and Maelo Cintron.

Through extensive interviews with the artists and writers and many with Chief Editor and Writer "Archaic" Alan Hewetson on the development, philosophy and eventual end of the company, coupled with 19 reprints of exceptional original stories Like " When I Was a Boy I Watched the Blood Wolves," "This Grotesque Green Earth," "Kill, Kill, Kill and Kill Again," and "The Legend of the Cannibal Werewolf," a complete checklist with writer/artist information for each issue and complete small full color reproductions of each of the 67 issues covers (on the inside book cover) as well a few critical assessments, plot synopsis and checklists for Skywald's reoccurring characters-The Human Gargoyles, Hell-Rider, The Saga of the Victims, Lady Satan, The Heap.

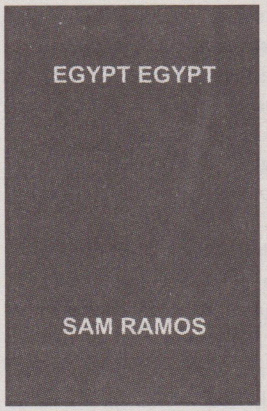
Often the failed paths of experimentation are far more interesting than their more successful counterparts, and the history of this sadly short lived independent publisher based in the comics hub of New York city in the Early 70s is no exception. Its history touches on a lot of "Bronze age" greats. Chief editor Hewetson recounts serving at Marvel as Stan Lee's assistant, his interviews and visits with Dr. Fredrick Wertham (*Seduction of The Innocent*), his travels around the country while writing The Horror Mood in graveyards and Lovecraft's old haunts, and the unique personalities of the other writers, such as the tenacity of "Awkward" Augustine—awe inspiring!

Hewetson in his own words is what makes this book shine; "Several times a day, every day, for years, my mind flip flopped from the conservative editorial and business responsibilities of putting out big circulation magazines distributed on newsstands throughout North America, to wallowing in gore-dripping images of extreme bloodletting, perverse violence, depraved human degradation, insanity and moral wretchedness, none of which, despite many readers believing otherwise, I took seriously."

In their day, the Skywald titles were critically panned for being too lurid.Midway through this tome, however, the horror and comics fan is already half way into their eBay searches and haunting the bins at the local comic den to find back issues, which is the best recommendation this book could get! It is a careful, well-researched, and dare-I-say loving tribute of some of the most intense horror comics ever published, and a great tribute to Archaic Al Hewetson, who sadly passed away shortly before the book was published.

There's heaps of ephemera, advertising solicitations, unpublished and original artwork, sketches, photographs as well as reproductions of panels in addition to the 19 reproduced stories. This is an excellent introduction to the "Horror Mood" and Skywald Publishing for all Horror and Comics fans as well as an exciting complement for the rabid completist and die-hard fans. The book is well laid-out and by letting the stories often speak for themselves, largely avoids tedious blow-by-blow written plot synopsis often in comics send ups, which are difficult with comic stories half -based on artwork and half on storyline. My only complaint with the book is the wonderful Pablo Marcos book cover should have been complemented with lettering akin to the original Skywald Books to retain the "Horror Mood" It's a minor quibble in an otherwise excellent retrospective.

—Ken Sanderson



Egypt Egypt
Sam Ramos
139 pages
sam.e.ramos@worldnet.att.net
www.bookpeople.com

Egypt Egypt reads like a Steinbeck story—it is dry and unexciting, yet it gives ample clarity to time and place. Its main characters live a banal high school existence and encounter little in the way of hardship and conflict. The issues they face are the same as any middle class American high schooler but thankfully they are not played out or embellished like the issues seen on any teen TV melodrama. The trade off, of course, is that *Egypt Egypt* moves very slowly, paying little regard to the reader's interest.

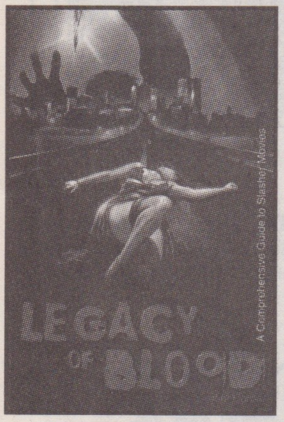
The story follows a group of friends in Austin, Texas through their senior year of high school. The main focus is on John, a pothead burnout. His primary (if not only) mode of expression is his writing where he muses on his relationships, his Mexican heritage, his life, and his hometown of Austin. But most of the time he is doing nothing but letting things happen to him. For example, when an obnoxious and assertive girl named Sarah becomes too domineering in her relationship with him he avoids her until she more or less disappears. Similarly, the graduation ceremony—primed to be the ending high point of the story—has John wondering if he will even graduate. His concern grows exponentially as the book goes on but when the day arrives, and nothing indicates John has made any effort to ensure a diploma, the drama is explained like this: "[John] was glad...there was no asterisk next to his name with a footnote. 'May Not Graduate.'" The conflicts in *Egypt Egypt* seem to resolve themselves without creative yarn spinning.

In lieu of inventive story lines the author relies more on giving his characters depth. He can spend pages working a character thoughtfully from one opinion to its polar opposite. Case in point: when viewing an Andy Warhol painting John is at first disgusted with its generic simplicity. To John, Warhol was trash while artists like DaVinci and Bethoven produced original works of heartfelt genius. When he saw a Warhol, he felt nothing, a "negative recipro-

cal of fullness — even less than emptiness." This starts John down a mind-bend that eventually leads him to recognize Warhol as "special" based on his habit of placing standard, boring nothingness -like a Campbell's soup can—on it's own stage. It is this sort of thoughtfulness in *Egypt Egypt*'s characters that makes the story move, and not the actual story itself.

What saves a Steinbeck story, for me, is that it preserves an era. Even though I don't get the emotional roller coaster of an exciting thriller, or the brain jog of a witty mystery, I can still read *Of Mice and Men* and get lost in the trials of living in early 1900s America. Perhaps in 50 years people will be able to read this and feel the same way about Y2K America.

-Craigums



Legacy of Blood:
A Comprehensive Guide to Slasher Movies
Jim Harper
192 Pages • $17.95
Critical Vision:
An Imprint of Headpress
40 Rossall Avenue, Radcliffe
Manchester, M26 1JD, UK

Legacy of Blood is an in-depth study of slasher movies, which is not one of the most critically beloved film genres, but one with a specific draw and audience.

The book opens up with the history of the slasher genre, from its genesis, with movies such as Hitchcock's *Psycho*, to the seventies Giallo films, and the true, first, (and possibly best) slasher film, *Halloween*.

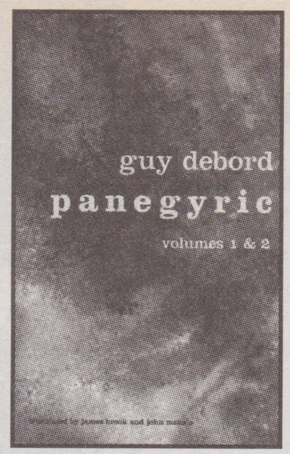
Harper breaks down the slasher film into its component parts: location, victims, parents and authority figures, and the killer. He explains social subtext in slasher movies, from irresponsible characters bringing harm upon themselves, to the ills of society finding their expression in the actions of an axe-wielding maniac.

He also makes it clear that there is also a spectrum of quality and craft in slasher movies. Some, as the critics have maintained are simply pointless gore fests. The thing is, sometimes those films are the most fun to watch. Sure, many slasher flicks are to art what a hot dog is to the culinary world, but hey, who can resist movies that are so silly, they sport names like *Killer Party, Aerobicide,* or *Hide and Go Shriek*? Sometimes suspense and plot progression are an integral part of the program, as in *Halloween*, but how does that explain the fact that predictable, one-act blood fests like *Maniac* are so popular with legions of slasher fans?

Legacy of Blood covers 200 films, including cast and credit details. The films are reviewed in a relative sense, considered for their merit in the slasher world, instead of comparing them with all other films, as many critics seem to do. Harper tells about each film in an historical context, with details of influence taken and given.

This is definitely a well-done book but it isn't the sort of book that I would try to convince anyone to pick up. It's limited to the sort of audience that already knows which episode of *Friday the 13th* saw the debut of Jason's hockey mask. To slasher fans everywhere: go grab a copy of *Legacy of Blood.*

—Andy Shoup



Panegyric Volumes 1&2
Guy Debord
Verso
180 Varick Street
New York, NY 10014
versony@versobooks.com

The motivation for reproducing this autobiography in hardback is entirely financial and an odd choice given the content. Of course this is true for any book, but we allow our ideas of how "a thing" should be treated to dominate and we forget that this world has other priorities. We are fools. We imagine that Guy, for the Troll that he became, would on the one hand reject something as *pleasant* as this new Verso title as a representation of his life and work while demanding its quality. His life, as his aging face accurately demonstrates, was not nice, but its quality is unquestioned.

Guy was one of the founders of the Situationist International and any hagiography thereof has to include him at its front and center. He was (by all accounts) responsible for the major splits in the SI, which included eliminating the artists, the Nashists, and finally everyone who was not Guy. He was the author of *Society of the Spectacle* which continues to be one of the most influential theoretical tracts of the late 20th century. Guy was an auteur whose films could be in the dictionary under *avant-garde film*. His art, including the powerful *The Naked City*, echoes through popular, and particularly counter, culture today.

Panegyric *Volume 1* has been around in English for near a decade and is a narrative tract that covers Guy's approach to life more than it actually provides what a completionist would want in the autobiographical form. Guy does not provide insight as to why he made hard choices at particular times. As a matter of fact his infamy is barely a topic within his story. Instead he devotes chapters to drinking alcohol, touring Europe, military strategy, etc. This is a very short book that barely tells the story that we would want about who exactly is this Debord character. Instead we have the clearly stated position from Guy about who he wants us to believe he is. His guard is to be admired, and may be an impossibly luxury in our far more media aware era. Today he very well may have suffered the fate of a Chumbawumba. Blended into a media slurry that is neither as interesting nor as solid as he (or they) deserved.

Volume 2 is the hook for this new book. Prior to this we could find *Volume 1*, as a paperback, in the bargain bin of our local bookshop. *Volume 2* provides, in exactly the same precise targeted fashion as *Volume 1*, a visual representation of the life of Guy Debord. There are snapshots, about one every five years, of the progression (or more accurately degradation) of Guy. There are pictures of a few of his friends. There are some great urban shots of Paris. The images are interesting, evocative, and, as is true with everything the Guy does, provide the observer something to think about.

In this time, if it were not for the quickly passing cachet of the SI, Debord would be passed right over by the Academy, by journalists, and by most readers. His politics are both too rigorous and too libertine. His aesthetic is too French. His references are too poetic and obscure.

Debord rang the bell that told of the end of the 20th century. His story is that of the price that comes at seeing past illusion. We live in a time of illusion.

—Aragor

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MOVIES

BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

HE'S JUST A SIMPLE MAN

The world needs more freaks. Real freaks. I don't mean some jerk acting like an asshole and annoying people. I mean people who are truly different, interesting, and exciting. People you would like to know and hang out with. People you would just be happy to be around.

Klaus Nomi is a freak in the best sense of the word. I first saw Nomi in the film **Urgh! A Music War**. At the time, I didn't think much of him or his music. I guess it was too arty for an eleven-year old. When I now look at the performances, I am surprised I wasn't more into it. **The Nomi Song** takes a look at this interesting man through his music and the remembrances of his friends and collaborators.

The Nomi Song opens with Ann Magnuson recalling the first time she met Nomi. She was leaving a show at Max's Kansas City and her friend introduced her to Nomi. Nomi jumped up on a pile of rubble and began singing an opera piece to the empty street. Magnuson was amazed, and invited him to perform in a vaudeville cabaret show she and her friends were putting on. Most of the show was people dressing up and lip synching to songs. The MC informed the audience that what they were about to hear was actually Nomi singing. When he came onstage and sang in his high operatic voice people were amazed. Watching the grainy black and white clip from one the shows I am too. Magnuson was moved to tears.

Klaus Nomi was born Klaus Sperber in Essen, Germany. He moved to Berlin to study music and worked as a janitor at the Deutsche Oper in Berlin. He left Berlin for New York City. It isn't made clear what he intended to do when he got to New York, yet when he fell in with the New Wave art crowd he found a group of people who wanted to work with him. In my opinion, the footage from this period is the most exciting. Compared to the costumes and the props from the early period, the footage from **Urgh!** seems very tame.

Klaus Nomi's performances in New York were hugely successful. He then took his show on the road. It did really well in Wisconsin and Chicago. Then they made the mistake of booking a show opening for Twisted Sister in New Jersey. Page Wood, drummer and art director for Nomi, remembers that playing in New Jersey wasn't such a good idea. "Geographically it was six miles from Manhattan, culturally it was three thousand miles."

Nomi then succumbs to the mentality that leads to the downfall of all semi-famous people. He thought he should be more popular that he was. So he leaves the friends and collaborators who have gotten him to where he was, signs up with a major label, and tries to become a superstar. He does end up becoming famous in Europe.

The Nomi Song incorporates some great performances that span Nomi's career. You see him in black and white at his minimalist beginning. Then he performs along with collaborator Joey Arias on Saturday Night Live as a back-up singer for David Bowie. I had never seen the performance of *The Man Who Sold The World* prior to this film though I have seen the *TVC-15* footage many times. It seems as if Bowie has conveniently adopted a similar style to Nomi's. Finally, you see him performing with a full orchestra. (www.thenomosong.com)

"Have you seen it?" my friend whispers to me during the previews. "No." She asks down the line. Besides her, only the token male in our group has seen **Deep Throat**. We were waiting to see **Inside Deep Throat** a documentary that examines the controversy and popularity surrounding the porn film **Deep Throat**.

Deep Throat is a sixty-minute film made for $25,000 that is the most successful independent film of all time. Its basic plot is the story of a woman whose clitoris was in the back of her throat. Therefore she loved to perform oral sex. Porn plots always crack me up. Somehow this film was the one that was able to make seeing a porn movie fashionable. Celebrities went to see it and the news reported it, so regular people wanted to see it too. **Inside Deep Throat** looks at the political and social climate of the time to examine why the film garnered so much notoriety.

With the success of **Deep Throat** came the call from the religious right to get rid of pornography. **Inside Deep Throat** recalls the Nixon commission on pornography, which was conducted to find scientific proof about the potential harm pornography could have on society. The commission found it does not. The Reagan administration later conducts their own study that overturns the scientific findings, replacing it with witness testimony to unscientifically declare that pornography is harmful. I am sure Bush, Jr. and his guys will be up to some of the same nonsense.

As it turns out the only person brought up on charges for the film was actor Harry Reems. The government always seems to go after the wrong and/or easy targets. It seems to me the filmmakers or the people who were making all the money off the film should have been held more responsible. Reems was found guilty of conspiracy and sent off to jail. As prosecutor Charles Keeting, who himself later went to jail for racketeering, comments, "If we could just get rid of the terrorists, maybe we would have more time to fight pornography." I'm glad to see he still has his priorities straight.

Inside Deep Throat does an incredible job at collecting interviews with almost everyone involved in any aspect of what was happening with the film. There are the interviews with the director Gerard Damiano, the actors, the theater owners, the prosecutors, defense attorneys, and the New York City policemen who had to confiscate the film as well as a bunch of celebrities who might have an opinion on pornography. The only people they didn't get to interview was the alleged Mafia family who financed the film and benefited from its success.

Inside Deep Throat is rated NC-17, which may seem unnecessary for a documentary. I am sure you can discuss the subject of sex and pornography without having to show it. Yet, among all the catcalls and general rowdiness of the screening I attended, when Linda Lovelace is shown performing her infamous talent, the crowd shut up for a few minutes. Even I was amazed. Not that it made me go to see **Deep Throat** when it ended up playing in a nearby theater a few weeks later. (http://www.insidedeepthroatmovie.com)

I am sure all I have to tell most of you about the **Broad Daylight & Shine On Sweet Starlet** DVD is that there are women taking off the clothes to garage bands. The strip teases are meant to look like the stag films from way back when guys would just get off by seeing a women strip down to her underwear. Now in the days of hardcore porn, this is a dying art. Filmmaker John Michael McCarthy and photographer Victoria Renard try to revive it here with two hour-long collections. They traveled around the country getting girls to perform for them. I am surprised that I didn't recognize any of the strippers since San Francisco was one of the stops.

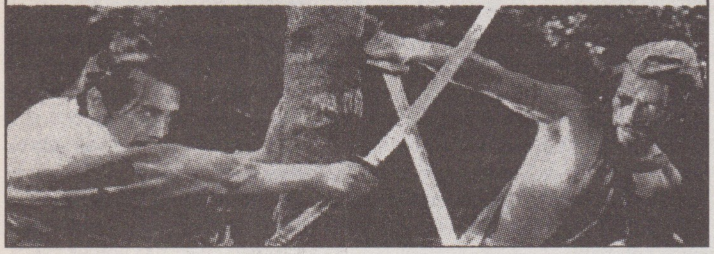
The camera work gets a bit too overbearing with the askew angles and amateurish zooming in and out. Also, I get the feeling the women aren't dancing to the songs on the soundtrack when they are being filmed. There is just something a bit off. The music must have been arranged later. The black and white footage

of **Shine On Sweet Starlet** is nicer to look at than the color **Broad Daylight**.

The extras are fairly amusing. There is a "making of" in which Renard is shown shooting a sequence, yet she is more dressed up the woman being filmed. McCarthy does a director commentary in which he reads from his journal in a Jack Kerouac Beat style. Plus, there is a collection of bits from McCarthy's films and music videos. Maybe next time we can see Seiji of Guitar Wolf or Jack Oblivian taking off their clothes. I'll look forward to that. (www.guerrillamonster.com)

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to me c/o *MRR*, PO Box 406760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760. Email me at carolynmrr@juno.com if you have a film screening in San Francisco. I will go see it.

FINAL CUT BY STEVEN SPINALI



THE SOUND OF SUCKING

In *All the President's Men*, Mark Bernstein used the term "Deep Throat" as shorthand for sources that could not be named. It was just more evidence of a humble porn film's pervasive cultural influence on popular culture. With **Inside Deep Throat**, filmmakers Fenton Bailey and Randy Barbato **(Party Monster)** have done an investigation almost as fascinating as Bernstein and Woodward's in its own odd way. **Inside Deep Throat** chronicles the making (and unmaking) of the most profitable film ever made—and the culture war it helped ignite. Like the background radiation from a cosmic Big Bang, its effects are measurable to this day.

In the early 70s, hairdresser Gerard Damiano had private dreams of being a filmmaker. This was a time when low-budget underground films by Andy Warhol, Joe Dallesandro, and John Waters had already made an imprint, with budgets only a fraction of a standard Hollywood project. From his job, Damiano was aware of the private frustrations of many middle-class women. Eventually, he also found out about the special "talent" of one woman, eventually known as "Linda Lovelace." That was all the inspiration he needed to start filming **Deep Throat**. His concept was as strained as it was bizarre—the story of a woman unable to climax in a usual way because her clitoris was way down in her throat.

Inside Deep Throat is rated NC-17, but it's most assuredly not pornographic. (It has maybe ten seconds of hardcore footage in total.) Like the original **Deep Throat**, this documentary attracts an extremely varied, upscale audience.

Word on the street had it that **Deep Throat** had mainstream appeal—what one New York magazine would call "pornographic chic." Lines of curiosity-seekers replaced the trenchcoat brigade. What started as a badly made $16,000 indie snowballed into a movie that would gross a reputed $600 million—making **Deep Throat** the most profitable film ever made.

Not that Damiano or Lovelace saw any profits. Once the movie became really successful, members of a New York crime family nudged Damiano and the other producers out. The legal climate was hardly in the producers' favor to defy the mob. The film hopped from town to town, and no sooner was it banned in one then it appeared somewhere else. At one point, profits were so outrageous that the gangster bosses stopped counting the money and simply began weighing it. In addition, it was also the perfect way to launder drug money.

Deep Throat was notable for a series of public reversals that attract controversy to this day. In early interviews, Linda Lovelace seemed delighted with her newfound fame; later, she'd claim she was repeatedly raped during the filming; still later she was doing nude photo shoots. When the Nixon-backed Commission on Pornography suggested a link between pornography and male aggression, feminists began picketing theaters—a strange thing for a film that had earned the reputation of being a "couples'" porn film. And instead of sparking a new generation of low budget, independent-minded films, porn quickly became an industry of made-for-video/web schemes. The Citizens for Decent Literature, spearheaded by Charles Keating, repeatedly denounced **Deep Throat** publicly; later, he'd be tossed into prison for a savings and loan scandal that bears his name. Harry Reems, the film's co-star, would be the first actor in history to be charged and convicted for his work; later, fully absolved of the charges, he'd become a real estate agent and born-again Christian.

And Damiano's underground porn, blessed with its own chic, was replaced by an industry with grosses in the hundreds of millions a year. Instead of playing in theaters, the films are available in video shops, from online downloads, on direct-to-DVD; there's even a glitzy Vegas porn convention every year. What began in dingy theaters was transported into the home, where concepts like "community standards" would no longer apply. Underground no more.

It can be argued that war is a pornography of sorts, but **Gunner Palace** has an unusual take on the conflict. The ramparts of Uday Hussein's grand palace may have been reduced to rubble, but once you've passed through the front gateway, it's a different world. At times, the images bring to mind some of the more surreal scenes from **Apocalypse Now**. Uday's bedroom, still intact, is a courtyard-sized faux palace with a three-story ceiling, man-sized wooden decorative treatments, and a towering covered bed. In the back, there's an Olympic-size swimming pool. U.S. soldiers are diving into the water, and sunning themselves in inner tubes. War never seemed so fun.

In their documentary, Michael Tucker and Petra Epperlein are quick to let you know that a soldier's life in Iraq isn't all fun and games. As embedded media, Tucker tries to capture thoughts and images that never make it to the evening news. His film is alternately gripping, tiresome, amusing and tragic—again, much like the life of a soldier.

The Gunner Palace is at its most interesting when the solders ponder the business of killing. One circumspect soldier says he initially had mixed feeling about taking a life; he justified it by saying "it's me or them." Another says he killed his first Iraqi his first week there—and a bit of strained pride shows on his face. Still another sheepishly admits that he discharged his rifle only once, by accident. Many of the soldiers, like so many in wars past and present, are barely past their eighteenth birthday. But one is actually grateful for such a range of new experiences, things he'll be able to tell his children and grandchildren.

This naiveté hits full stride when a group of soldiers break into the house of a potential enemy collaborator. Their eyes flash with fear as they wait at the threshold of an unfamiliar room, none of them particularly excited about being the first to advance into what could very well be a trap.

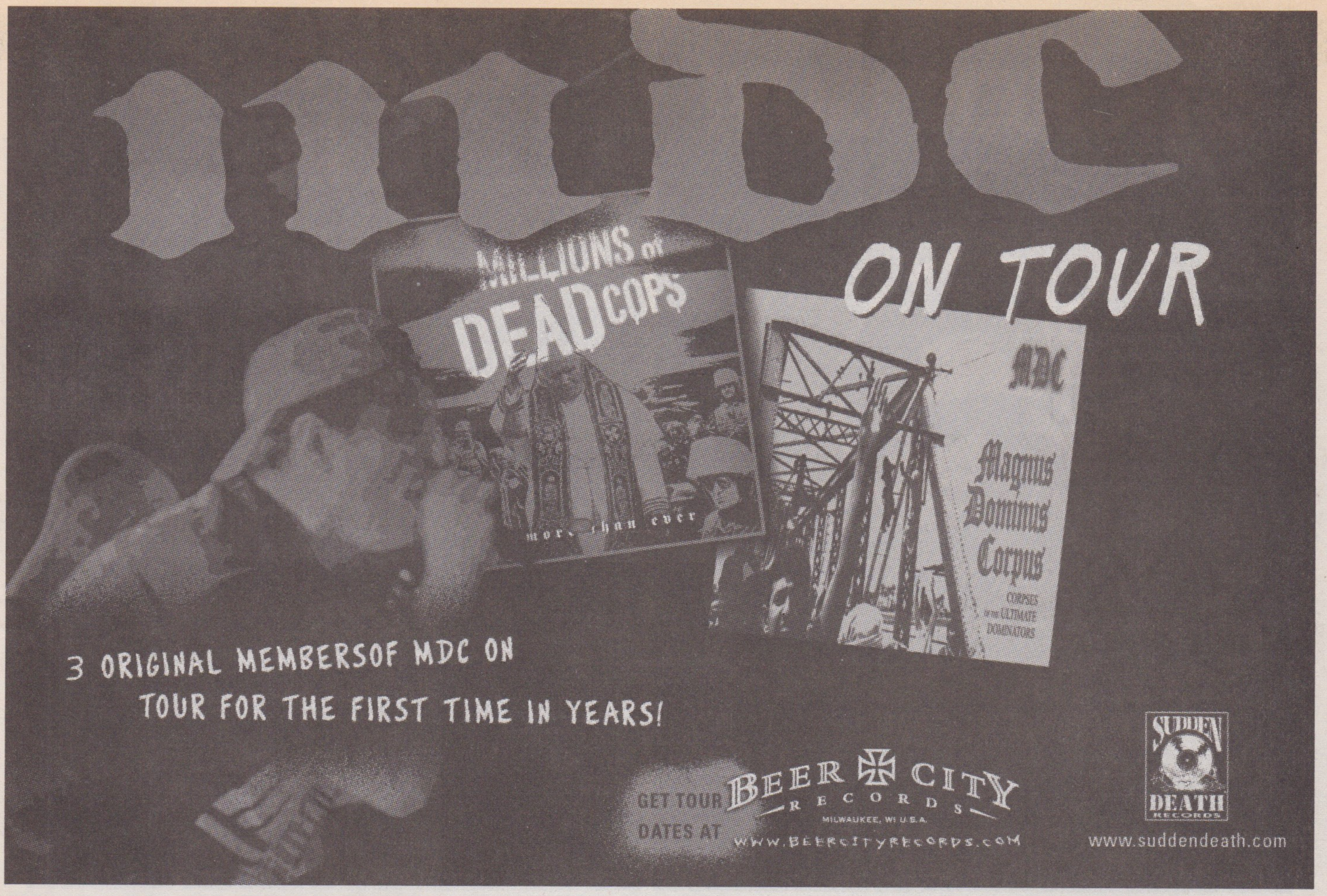
For a war film, there's surprisingly little violence, and no killing. In this way, **Gunner Palace** reflects the workaday life of a soldier with a surprising lack of sensationalism. In fact, the film often seems to ramble on not unlike the second half of Stanley Kubrick's **Full Metal Jacket**. Daily life isn't particularly eventful—notwithstanding the perennial threat of roadside bombs and sniper bullets.

Bucking against a recent trend in documentaries, **Gunner Palace** seems unwilling to step on too many toes. It's pushed through a skein that takes the Vietnam legacy into account—another unpopular conflict, but whose veterans suffered public disdain on their return. Determined that this will not happen again, even the most determined anti-war spokesmen are careful to acknowledge the sacrifice of the fighting man. Mentioning that the war might lack full justification can be construed to mean that the deaths and injuries are meaningless. **Gunner Palace** tap-dances on egg shells as it gains the trust of soldiers, and skirts politics altogether.

The result isn't completely satisfying. Moreover, the sketchiness of the material suggests that the film might have been released prematurely. It doesn't offer us the wide-eyed revelations of **Control Room**, or the passionate detail of **Uncovered: The War in Iraq**. It rarely ask the questions we want to hear.

Without much in the way of a point of view, **Gunner Palace** suffers from a certain lack of focus, as if the film had at times been randomly edited. Sometimes, this approach takes us into unexpected directions. A unit leader says he has a feeling that they're not welcome in one town, despite a trail of giggling children and unconcerned pedestrians; when they head out, they hear percussions on the inside of their vehicle. The children are throwing rocks. Later, we see footage of Iraqi soldiers getting trained; they can barely march in unison. While dressed in sharp American-style fatigues, it's hard to imagine they'll ever be ready for full-fledged battle.

If anything, **Gunner Palace** suggests that there's no single voice for the fighting men and women in Iraq. The carefully edited pieces on network TV are here replaced by a more honest (if ambiguous) response. I'm not sure if it's enough for a full-fleshed documentary, but for now it will have to do.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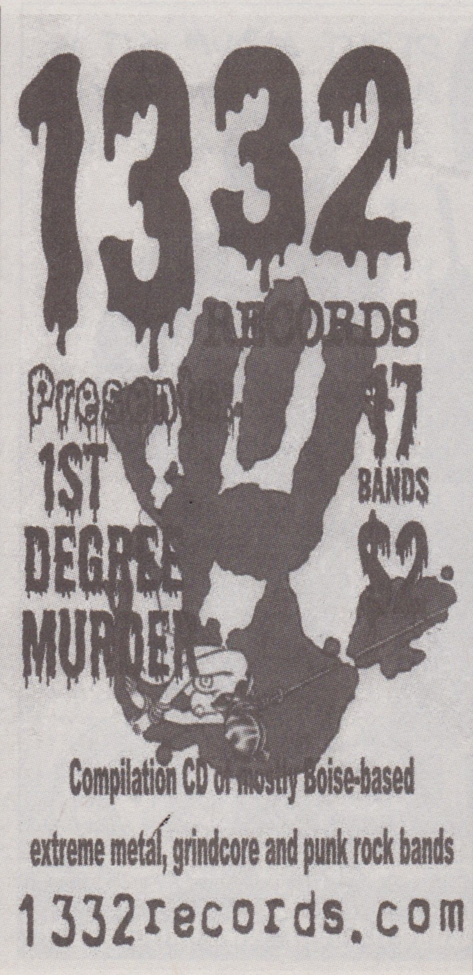
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THE AFTERMATH – "Degenerate Fuck Crew" EP

Holy shit, the vocalist sounds like he swallowed a bucket of nails before he recorded this. For the uninitiated, the AFTERMATH plays awesome mid-paced punk/hardcore out of DC. I liked their first EP, and I love this. Fans of UNITED MUTATION or SHEER TERROR should definitely pick this up. If you don't know the aforementioned, then imagine STRIKING DISTANCE with the pitch adjustment turned waaaaay down. Apparently Side A was originally released in 2003 as a demo. Ding! Ding! Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you the record of the month. (CC)
(Firestarter, www.firestarterrecords.com)

AGENTS OF ABHORRENCE – "Covert Lobotomy" 9"

This is noisy, feedback-ridden grind from a new Australian guitar and drum duo. I don't think it's just due to the lack of bass, but the sound on this is a bit too trebly and thin and thus not so heavy, which is a shame cuz the music is super fast and frenetic, not unlike DISCORDANCE AXIS, ASTERISK*, or HEAD HITS CONCRETE mixed with the indie-noise weirdness of ORTHRELM and the like. Still, these guys come up with some pretty intriguing riffs and sounds, so it's definitely worth checking out for grind fans. (EL)
(Missing Link, Basement, 405 Bourke St, Melbourne, VIC 3000, AUSTRALIA, www.missinglink.net.au)

THE A-LINES – "You Can Touch" LP

.......Good lord, I do believe we actually have a *fantastic* garage record here for a change!!!!! And it's done by euro-dames!!!! Produced by that chronic masturbator known as Billy Childish......featuring Kyra (HEADCOATEES) on lead vocals in French and English!!! This motherfucking record is *hot*!!!!! My only complaint is the hum-drum cover of "Agitated" by the ELECTRIC EELS........that is by far the weakest track on the record....these gals need a few years of *heavy* psychedelic drug abuse and around the clock listening of the BRAINBOMBS to even attempt to reproduce what the EELS achieve with that classic little gem!!!!!!!!! On the other hand, the cover of LOVE's "Can't Explain" comes off real good and "garage-like".....!!!!! My fave track here is the first song "Four"......I just finished listening to it "four" times in a row.....now I'm so hot and bothered that I'm craving "foreplay" with all "four" of these hot mamas!!!!! Mmmmmmm, taste my fingers...... they smell like butthole.... (SW)
(Sympathy, www.sympathyrecords.com)

A-LINES – "One Day / Heidi's Head"

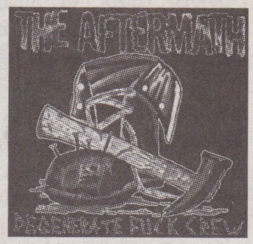
"One Day" is a melancholy, vitriol-tinged number that bops and rolls with a great 60s-sounding lonely-girl riff: it's beautiful. "Heidi's Head," a KLEENEX cover on the other noggin, is a punchy, lobotomized crawl through stalagtites that brings all the good early 90s stripped-down punkers (like the INHALANTS, remember?) to mind. It's a tale of intellect divorced from all physical constraints—brains floating in fishtanks, hooked up to wires and life-support systems. I don't know anything about the A-LINES but that they're good and I really, really want to hear that LP, like now. (JH)
(Sympathy, www.sympathyrecords.com)

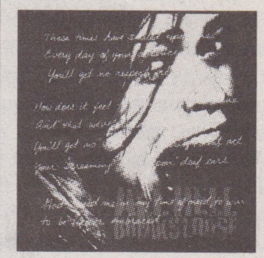
ALLEE DER KOSMONAUTEN – "Indianer Jones" LP

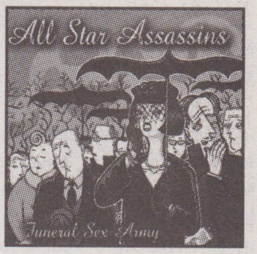
ALLEE DER KOSMONAUTEN is a crust band from Germany, and on this LP they deliver four long anthems that may appeal to fans of NEUROSIS and the like. You know the drill: slow, long songs with quiet intros and the occasional upsurge of loud guitars and pounding drums. The lyrics are both in English and German. This album was recorded at the Kuschelrock studios in Bremen, where other German metalcore bands like MORSER, SYSTRAL, and ACME have recorded in the past. After listening to this LP a couple of times I must say that I like it, but that it isn't mind-blowingly good. The songs tend to get a little boring and although this definitely isn't bad, I couldn't make more of it than "just OK." (JD)
(Unsociable, PO Box 105824, Bremen, GERMANY, www.unsociable.net)

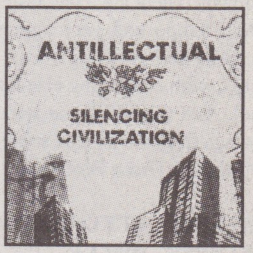
ALL HELL BREAKS LOOSE – CD

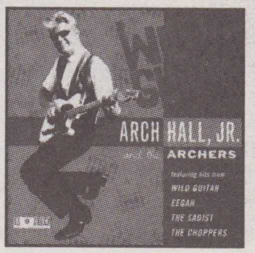
Fairly generic but otherwise not overtly offensive tough-guy mosh-metal from Miami. These guys never stray an inch from the verse/gang-backing-vocal chorus/open-E pit-stomp formula as carved in stone by the likes of HATEBREED, but they at least don't do terrible things like sing, and their lyrics are slightly less bluntly bullying than usual. They even have a "tear you down" vengeance number written to the theme of The Texas Chainsaw Massacre and that's a winner in my book. (EL)
(Surprise Attack, 2601 Peach St, Erie, PA 16508, www.surpriseattackrecords.com)











ALL STAR ASSASSINS – "Funeral Sex Army" CD

ALL STAR ASSASSINS plays bastardized pop punk that hints in a huge way at listening to later SCREECHING WEASEL, CHIXDIGGIT, or BLINK 182. Really, really un-phenomenal music that's executed with precision and sure to please the family, pissing off punks worldwide. This kind of CD will get me a dollar at Amoeba, and that's only about 1/100th of the amount that I should be paid for listening to this Weird Al vocal-style crap. (WL)

(no address)

ANTILLECTUAL – "Silencing Civilization" CD

ANTILLECTUAL plays politically charged melodic hardcore that brings to mind PROPAGANDHI, DBS, or STRIKE ANYWHERE. Words are screamed or sung over metal-tinged guitar parts. Everything moves in the same direction. An inspired effort, for sure. (WL)

(Angry Youth, Hertogstraat 17B, 6828 Er Arnhem, NETHERLANDS)

ARCH HALL. JR. AND THE ARCHERS – "Wild Guitar!" CD

A typically busting-at-the-seams Norton release: 48 tracks of music from classic (to my degenerate crowd) Arch Hall, Jr. films such as the *Choppers*, *Wild Guitar* and *The Sadist*, with promo spots for and dialogue from those opuses and live recordings of ARCH AND THE ARCHERS, including a set at the Twin Drive In at Pensacola, FL. More fun than a barrel of sadistic homicidal maniacs. (DD)

(Norton, Box 646 Cooper Station, New York, NY 10276)

AS LONG AS WE'RE ALL LIVING, WE ARE ALL DYING – "Premonitions" EP

Blood red vinyl and lots of skulls spoke metal to me before I ever set the needle down. In turn, it was different than I expected (I was expecting some thrash metal), but the metal was certainly there. What you get is a strong mix of straight-up metallic hardcore with a lot of riff-heavy breakdowns. There are a few faster parts, but a lot of it is mid tempo and very aggressive. Loud sweeping guitars and growling vocals sit prominently in the mix, with everything else kind of buried beneath it all. And this EP came with a CD-R of the same songs from the EP and some extra live tracks. (RC)

(Teenage Disco Bloodbath)

ASTHMA ATTTAQ / DIRTY SOUTH APOCALYPSE - split LP

These guys did a first-rate job putting this record together: clear vinyl in a hand screened cloth sleeve. It looks great! Musically both bands seem to be grounded in the style of spastic, screamy hardcore popularized a few years ago by REVRESAL OF MAN, ORCHID, and END OF THE CENTURY PARTY. Spacey two-piece ASTHMA ATTTAQ takes the sound and mellows it out with a lot of hypnotic emo melodies and prog rock noodling that build in blasts of noise and chaos. They're way too sleepy for my tastes, but definitely the better of the two bands on here. DIRTY SOUTH APOCALYPSE varies it up with a much heavier, faster sound, adding in a lot of monotonous grind and metal influences that I'm not into. The styles of the two bands work well for a split and it's great that this record is so DIY, but there is hardly an ounce of punk in it. (VH)

(Forever Escaping Boredom, 416 45th St Court West, Palmetto, FL 34221)

AUBURN BIKINI – CD

A five-piece band from Alabama that truly has me stumped. It sounds indie rock then it kind of sounds a bit rockabilly. The music is spazzy at times, and then it turns to simple garage rock tones. The singer croons without actually singing, then leads the group in a chant. Lots of contradictions that would usually make music interesting. Unfortunately, I just can't get into this. (CK)

(Arkam)

BALLAST – "Sound Asleep" CD

BALLAST is a female-fronted crust-punk band from Quebec, Canada and this is their debut full-length on Profane Existence Records. I must say I didn't really find anything on this CD that I wasn't expecting. The music is pretty basic, straightforward crust-punk and the lyrics deal with a lot of the usual topics you'll find on punk records. The approach is more personal though, which makes it easier to relate to this. The female vocals and the entire band, probably because of the vocal delivery, reminded me a lot of SIGNAL LOST. BALLAST isn't quite that good yet, but they have that same sense of melody in their songs and are definitely on the way to becoming as good as the aforementioned band. I found this a quite enjoyable record. Recommended if you're into the kind of records that Profane Existence usually releases. (JD)

(Profane Existence, PO Box 8722, Minneapolis, MN 55408)

BAMN – "Anywhere but Forward" 10"

Wow, I really, really liked this. BAMN is from Sweden and cranks out some seriously awesome hardcore punk that is heavily influenced by both Scandinavian hardcore and contemporary crust bands like FROM ASHES RISE and TRAGEDY. There is also a slight but very recognizable touch of URANUS or ORCHID in here. I know there are a lot of bands playing this style of music these days; you're probably sick of constantly reading comparisons to TRAGEDY in every single review. But trust me, this is not the next clone—these guys pull off the contemporary crust style really well. Hell, they don't even sound that much like TRAGEDY. It's just that the anger and depression that jumps at you from this record is very comparable to that band. I urge you to check this out.(JD)

(Bridge, PO Box 1903, 58118 Linkoping, SWEDEN)

BASTARDS – "Demo 82" LP

Basically, this music on this record is the sort of thing that I live for. BASTARDS was one of the classic Finnish thrash bands, and have been an *MRR* favorite from almost the beginning of this fanzine. This LP compiles their 1982 demo recording, and it is incredible. Raw is the key word here, with a guitar tone I wish I could have programmed to play into my brain at all times and vocals that drive way past snotty into deranged territory. While never as unpredictable as their peers in TERVEET KADET or as catchy as LAMA or APPENDIX, BASTARDS helped create a blueprint that is still mined today by young punks the world over. This is wild and primitive hardcore punk at its finest, and is absolutely essential listening for anyone interested in international thrash. (GN)

(Assel, Groner Landstr, 48, 37081 Gottingen, GERMANY, assel-records@web.de)

STIV BATORS - "L.A. Confidential" CD

This is pretty much a reissue of the *L.A. L.A.* CD that came out in the mid-90s. This includes more STIV garage power pop, post-*Disconnected* LP. This has a couple bonus tracks including a sloppy rehearsal version of "Neat Neat Neat." Based mostly on five or so songs, with alternate mixes tossed in as well as demo versions, this disc is stretched to 18 tracks. Still recommended for the original singles tracks, which are great. Great liner notes too! (RL)

(Bomp!, www.bomp.com)

BLACK COBRA – CDEP

Pretty punishing and all-too-brief three-song EP of de-tuned resin-baked stoner sludge-core in the vein of 16, FLOOR, KYUSS, BONGZILLA, DRINK THE BLEACH, ELECTRIC WIZARD… you get the picture. Hard to say more with so little material (the whole CD comes in under 6 minutes), but I liked what I heard: super heavy production, catchy riffs and good shouted vocals. Hope to hear more. (EL)

(www.blackcobra.net)

BLACK DAHLIAS – "Wednesday Night" EP

A Sacramento group that play (often) simple and (mostly) classic '79 style power pop replete with fadeouts, repetitive choruses, and earnest appeal that might not be youthful but sounds legit. Tunes like "Easy Way Out" and "Mystery House" actually remind me of all them late-80s and early-90s "melodic 70s style" outfits like the PARASITES and the FIENDZ, with their clean sound and borderline stadium-punk crash and boom. Hell, they're all right. Can't be the first band to use this name, can they (and the guy from the DWARVES don't count). Judging from my brief exposure to the BLACK DAHLIAS, I'm saying that "Mystery House" is their best tune. (JH)

(Plastic Idol, www.plasticidolrecords.com, theblackdahlias@hotmail.com)

BLEEDING HICKEYS – "Friction Boy" EP

Desperate Post-Teenage Band Members. Four tracks of squalling indie rock with a hint of early 90s grunge-grrrl, NW style. The bass lopes along like a hungry hippo, and everything else is hanging on for the ride. The songs aren't fully focused yet but they have an engaging sound that would work for people who wander the earth pining for a new HUGGY BEAR or SUTURE. We'll see. (RW)
(no address)

THE BLOCKED - "Smashed Hits" CD

A collection from this short lived mod/power pop band from the UK circa the mid-90s. On the reliable Detour Records, this has more of a punky power pop feel than the straightforward mod usually associated with this label. This reminds me of the GUITAR GANGSTERS with a dash of UK indie a la THE HOUSEMARTINS. A good release; just don't expect suits. (RL)
(Detour)

BLOODY PHOENIX – "Wesley Snipes" EP

Straightforward no-frills hardcore/grind from this LA five-piece with some insanely brutal male/female high-/low-end vocal trade-offs. Pretty relentless throughout, the pace flips between regular fast hardcore and full-on blasting and the guitars are always super heavy. Definitely one for fans of EXCRUCIATING TERROR, DENAK, FLESH PARADE and all things grind. (EL)
(625, www.625thrash.com)

BONA ROBA – "Reach In and Get Her" CD

Chuck Eddy sticker blurb on the cover of the CD. Oh boy, the guy who insisted on the deification of a raft of digital-frosted turds in his *Stairway to Hell* book. Strike One. Well, I see they recorded this in New York City. Strike Two. The music is a more FM-ready take on MOONEY SUZUKI. I could easily picture this blasting out of the speakers at a multiplex during the advertising slide show followed by a robot announcer telling me what I had just heard. Hey, it's spring training so there's a lot of "Strike Three" going around these days, right? Grab some pine. (RW)
(no address)

BONEHOUSE – "The Fuse Is Lit" CD

I get the impression that this band's been around for a while, although this is my first exposure to them. It's pretty relentless punk in the style of English hardcore bands like GBH or BROKEN BONES—especially the later, embarrassing, *A Fridge Too Far* era GBH, unfortunately. Still, the songs sound solid and the lyrics are suitably angry and confrontational (taking on riot police, capitalist motherfuckers, instant punks, and Bill Gates, among others) while still taking the time to devote a couple of songs to the desire to thrash. Not bad at all, and definitely a must for any fans of BONEHOUSE out there. (AM)
(MassProd, www.massprod.com)

THE CANDY SNATCHERS – "Ugly On the Outside" CD

A collection of single and comp tracks from the great CANDY SNATCHERS. Almost follows up where the *Pissed Off, Ripped Off, Screwed* comp left off, though this is no way near a complete collection. And why should it be? If you are that much of an idiot that you didn't buy this stuff on vinyl the first time around then you don't deserve it. If, however, you regret your poor decision making, this collection includes some of the Candy Snatchers at their best: "Moronic Pleasures," "Bum Me Out," "Picture My Face" and their truly excellent cover of "Suffragette City." What we really need is a new CANDY SNATCHERS album. (CK)
(Roulette's, www.roulettesrecords.com)

CAREER SUICIDE – "Signals" EP

You know, I've been waiting for a band like CAREER SUICIDE for a long time. Totally snotty and relentlessly punk, they take the template set by the FREEZE on their classic *Guilty Face* EP and bring it into the present day. To my mind, they are heads and shoulders above most other bands currently playing in the early 80s proto/early hardcore style. Unlike the REGULATIONS, for example—and I know I'm in the minority with this opinion—CAREER SUICIDE sounds like they *couldn't* play any way other than this, rather trying too hard to sound like a particular band. That is, while there are clearly some punk historians in this band, their musical and lyrical decisions don't seem to be dictated by aesthetics alone. There is a really timeless quality to this music not because CAREER SUICIDE is stuck in the past, but because this is what punk sounds like, and will continue to sound like for all time. That said, *Signals* is not their best record—that distinction belongs to their self-titled LP—nor is even their best EP (*SARS*). The overall approach is a bit more mid-tempo, and while there are plenty of catchy vocal hooks, there is ever so slightly less to remember about these songs than other mid-tempo favorites of theirs like "SARS" and "Jonzo's Leaking Radiation." Nonetheless, CAREER SUICIDE remains one of the great bands of the last few years, and will likely become an all time classic. There is also a European picture disc press of this EP, and while I think the press on Slasher is limited, you hopefully know better than to let this slip by. (GN)
(Slasher, 307 Glenholm, Toronto, ON, M6E 3E2, CANADA, www.slasherrecords.com)

THE CHAINS – "'Till You Come Back Home/The Boy Who Took My Place"

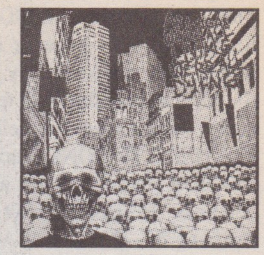
Two tracks of faithful 60s garage rock. Catchy songs that grab the ? AND THE MYSTERIANS vibe and roll with it. Fun stuff. (CK)
(Screaming Apple, Dustemichstr, 14, 50939 Koeln, GERMANY)

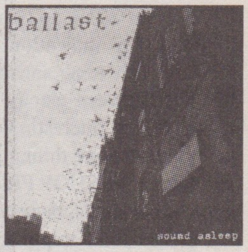
CHARM – "Shikami" EP

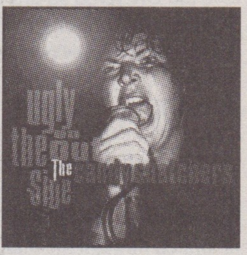
625 just keeps them coming! This time around Max gives us CHARM from Tokyo, Japan who blazes through ten tracks of manic, wall of distortion thrash. Though this is kind of sloppy, the crazy energy produced here is enough to push it over the top. All and all it is a pretty insane release and well worth checking out. Includes a CORROSION OF CONFORMITY cover for those who are keeping track. (RC)
(625, 625thrash.com)

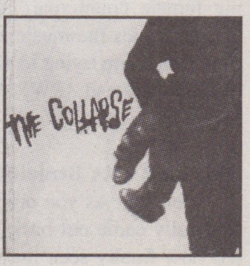
THE COLLAPSE – "Doomed With This Curse" EP

Furious, raging hardcore with sludgy, down-tuned tone, muddy, bottom-heavy bass power chords, eerie guitar leads, deleterious breakdowns coupled with, among others, CHAIN OF STRENGTH-styled power riffage, and INFEST intensity. Sort of...uh... extremely (and hauntingly?) reminiscent of HIS HERO IS GONE circa the *Dead of Night* EP or *15 Counts*. In fact, it's as if THE COLLAPSE held a bunch of HHIG riffs up to a mirror and through some sort of Frankensteinian fashion cobbled and transposed it all into this EP. Having eaten and breathed those HHIG records, I









feel justified to say that. So, with that said, are THE COLLAPSE to HHIG as BL'AST were to BLACK FLAG? Because admittedly this band shreds, and personally, by the late 80s I loved BL'AST, so only time will tell (as they say). Right now it makes it hard as hell to listen to. Fans of HIS HERO IS GONE, and EXTREME NOISE TERROR should give this a whirl. (BS)
(Endless Blockades, PO Box 3023, South Brisbane BC, QLD 4101, AUSTRALIA)

DC SNIPERS / SHOP FRONTS – split EP
This split offers up two of NYC's newest and, if this is any indication, finest. DC SNIPERS check in with some antisocial howl, walking the thin line between catchy punk and noisy bombardment. An interesting mix with the tunes to boot, but it has me thinking that they're still picking their camp. SHOP FRONTS have (dare I say) high-octane levels, but manage not to fall prey to any grease-punk trappings. Though straightforward, the male/female vocals and quirky 70s punk feel have me all smiles. (MC)
(Your Permanent)

DEMON'S CLAWS – "Demon's Claws" EP
The first song on this, "Demon's Claw," is great. Dirty, lo-fi, bluesy garage rock that conjures up the ghost of every great band you could possibly think of. Catchy and rockin'. Then there is a short instrumental blast "Space Freighte." Nice, but fairly average. Side B, "Side Street," is slow and dirge-y, and sounds like some reject from JOHNNY THUNDERS' last solo album. I'd recommend uppers for the next recording session. (CK)
(P. Trash, Peter Eichhorn, Dornbuschweg 10, 33649 Bielefeld, GERMANY)

DICKIES - "Stukas Over Disneyland" CD
The third DICKIES LP from 1983 here, which includes favorites "If Stuart Could Talk" and "Rosemary." This was reissued by Overground in 1998 so this must by some sort of repress. We all love the DICKIES so this should be a part of your collection in some form. (RL)
(Overground, www.overgroundrecords.co.uk)

DIRTEEZ – "Curse of the Haunted Cobra" CD
Very well produced French band doing a sort of echo-y punk take on the early 80s LA/Chicago goth sound, sort of like if DA and 45 GRAVE collaborated through the mail on their demos. You've got a gritty male vocalist competing with a drifting female counterpart to some effect, but the slickness robs the music of some of the sense of danger they are trying to access. Release the practice tapes instead. (RW)
(Nova Express)

DISFEAR – "A Brutal Sight of War" 10"
Awesome! As you probably know this release originally came out back in 1993 on CD. And it has now finally seen the light of day again as a limited pressing (1000 copies) on vinyl. DISFEAR pummel their way through nine tracks of hard-charging D-Beat insanity. They are one of the kings of the 1990s crust scene and are still cranking out records today. You already know you need to be walloped by this wall of distortion, so you better get one before they are gone. (RC)
(Feral Ward, feralward.com)

DIVEBOMB HONEY – "Get Up" EP
Fun new wave punk which sounds like it's from 1981. Keyboards mixed in the garage-y sound a la B-52's and an IRS band or two. Where's that DEVO planter hat when you need it? A good EP. (RL)
(Jilted, thedivebombhoney@gmail.com)

DOLL SQUAD WITH CLARE MOORE – "Retro Dolls from Hipsville" CDEP
Cringeworthy title, but what can you do? Four songs from four women working a sort of Diana Rigg/Honor Blackman aesthetic—from Australia. It's pretty straightforward Modern Rock: one speedy song that has a sorta REVILLOS buzz to it; a kinda mid-tempo not-that-great-number, and a couple speedier tunes. Has gusto. Kinda NIKKI & THE CORVETTES with the energy dialed down. Hard to judge, but I think a rougher and less-pristine production would suit 'em a little better. (JH)
(www.geocities.com/dollsquad_rock)

DOPPELGANGER – "Gauze T-Shirts Won't Save You Now" EP
Pissed off California kids DOPPELGANGER dish out fifteen blazing tracks of CHARLES BRONSON worship. A few years ago it seemed like everyone was going for this sound, but no one could pull it off. DOPPELGANGER seem to recognize that playing fast doesn't make up for shoddy songwriting, and sound like they listen to as much NEGATIVE APPROACH and VOID as they do CB and INFEST. With relentlessly fast drumming and ferocious vocals, DOPPELGANGER has got the sound, aesthetic and attitude down to a tee. And they're not pulling any punches—lyrically taking stabs at targets like Gilman St. and GAUZE t-shirts... Just what you need to get your blood pumping! (VH)
(625, www.625thrash.com)

DOUBLE CROSSED – "Your Attitude Bites" EP
DOUBLE CROSS is a good, fast, straight edge hardcore band out of Chicago. Musically they don't stray that far from the youth crew mold, however I do hear a strong MENTAL influence in the vocals and overall production of the recording. The drumming alone makes this record worth repeated listening. Aesthetically, the "urban cartoon" artwork and glib slang used in the lyrics definitely remind me of something that could be on Lockin' Out. Check it out. (CC)
(Lifeline, P.O. Box 692, Midlothian, IL 60445)

DRAGSTRIP DEMONS – "Mexican Psychobilly" CD
The title pretty much says it all... rough-and-ready, loud psychobilly from (I assume) south of the border. Apparently they are now defunct. It's pretty rowdy stuff. (AD)
(Crazy Love, www.crazyloverecords.com)

DUTCH MASTERS – "Radioactive" EP
This record is okay but I like TEENGENERATE better!!!!! Yet more lo-fi punk-rock-n-roll......on the Goner label outta Memphis.....!!!! Still, this record is far superior than anything put out on Rip Off in the last ten years!!!!! So suck my dick!!!! (SW)
(Goner, 2152 Young Ave, Memphis, TN 38104)

DUTCH MASTERS – "Radioactive" EP
ERIC FRIEDL of the legendary OBLIVIANS finally returns with a new band. Full-on, distorted, fucked up rock and roll. Messy and completely fun. I am personally glad he hasn't gone as soft as his fellows OBLIVIANS. Not that I don't like that shit too. It is just nice to see one of them keeping the rock loud and nasty. (CK)
(Goner, 2152 Young Ave, Memphis, TN 38104)

FASTLANE - "New Start" CD
Good melodic pop punk with some slightly metallic riffing on the guitar. A mix of NEW FOUND GLORY, THE ATARIS, and the guitar stylings of NOFX. Slick stuff with the harmonies and all, but this does have a great energy and feel with never a dull moment. A strong CD from this UK band for you pop punkers. (RL)
(Sucka-Punch, PO Box 8456, Alcester, B49 5RE,UK, www.fastlanerock.com)

FEVERS – "Love Always Wins" CD
I remember the FEVERS. They bring to mind a certain time (about 12:45 AM) and particular place (the treacherous stretch between the corner Stop 'n' Rob and my groove on the couch). Picture it: I was (relatively) young, the Bay Area retrograde "rock" scene didn't embarrass, and San Francisco's fragrant back streets belonged to us…and the stars. The FEVERS been waging their pop crusade in seedy clubs for what has to be nearly a decade—and while they may have left me and the 1990s behind, I'll never forget. Love Always Wins is quite an album, if you like love songs: the group play a kind of beat-heavy pop that combines wide-eyed power-pop chops and fun/weepy 60s girl group melodies. The teeth-grinding hybrid proves how fun stalled romance can be: as fun as eating last February's Valentine's Day candy today. "Don't Tell Me It's Wrong," "Bound to Cry," "Lonesome Tears" (and everything else?) are all love songs—but love always wins, and honestly purveyed pop is usually worth the effort spent in hearing it. (JH)
(Alien Snatch, Mörkiweg 1, 74199, Untergruppenbach, GERMANY)

FLATFOOT 56 – "Knuckles Up" CD

Tough street/hardcore punk...with bagpipes. I guess they're going for the DROPKICK MURPHIES thing. I'm guessing from the area code that they are from the Chicago area.
(Fatcalf Productions, www.flatfoot56.com)

THE FLORENCE NIGHTINGALES – "Nightingales" EP

Hailing from north Alabama, this debut by the FLORENCE NIGHTINGALES offers four tracks of basic, mid-speed punk. Stylistically, the first thing that came to mind was the shouted girl-punk of Reno's WRECKS, though these tracks are sharply rebellious without a particularly strong sense of humor. The tunes don't stick to the ribs, though you might like the handmade silkscreen cover and the purple-swirl vinyl. (SS)
(Arkam, 1025 Highway 69 S, Savannah, TN 38372)

FRONTSIDE FIVE – "No Pegs" CD

A skate-core endurance test—will you take the challenge? "Old school" Denver-style skate punk with some stellar rhymin' and stealin' from some legit coping-shredding marauders. Sponsors include: Vision Street Wear, and Equilibrium. (BS)
(frontsidefive.net)

FUCKED UP – "Generation" EP

Alright! FUCKED UP comes at us with another EP. This record accompanied their recent tour of the West Coast, which itself was great. Here we start of with a track called "Generation," which is a slower rockin' tune. Side B starts packing more power and has catchier hardcore songs; both tracks are standouts. My favorite track off this disc is the last one, called "Magic Kingdom." You all definitely nailed this one, it's overall another really good record by a great band. (MS)
(Slasher)

THE FUX – "I'm On TV" CD

Yeow! THE FUX are armed with a lead guitarist that's playing leads or solos over half the time, but he's got the skills to make it work. These guys also made two six-minute punk songs that aren't crap! These guys mix familiar 80s punk sounds with hard rock and made a fine disc: a CD that's 17 songs with a solid 12-page booklet. Nice package, good band—check it out. (HM)
(Valiant Death, 3337 Poplar Dr, Smithfield, VA 23430, www.valiantdeath.com,
www.thefux.org)

GARMONBOZIA – CD

I hate to be so sour, but whatever place the cello had in modern hardcore was, in my mind, exhausted a day after NEUROSIS used it 15 years ago. I've yet to hear it in any other instance not sound distracting, out of place or out of tune since, and GARMONBOZIA does nothing to sway me from this. There doesn't seem to be an obvious fit for it in the crusty hardcore sound, so the cellist is all-too-often left to meander about the strings with seemingly little relation to what the rest of the band is doing. Sorry to be so down on this—I know some people are into this band, so maybe the whole cello thing won't bug you as much as it did me, but it was definitely not for my tastes. I did like the Garbage Pail Kids band illustrations though. (EL)
(Profane Existence, PO Box 8722, Minneapolis, MN 55408, www.profaneexistence.com)

GAY COWBOYS IN BONDAGE – "The Completely Silly Discography (1983-84)" CD

This 34-track CD features their demo, 7" and a live show effectively returning the GCIB message back to the masses. Now Joe Punk Rock doesn't have to sell his ass to get the previously rare GCIB discography. Now Joe Punk Rock can download this shit directly into his iPod... Thanks Burrito Records! Not only does this CD have all their recordings, but also it has a write up from Milo, interviews, tiny lyrics and cool flyers within its fine 24-page CD booklet. Did I mention that GAY COWBOYS IN BONDAGE ROCKS!? They do! An excellent CD. (HM)
(Burrito/Sound Idea Distribution, PO Box 3204, Brandon, FL 33509-3204, www.soundideadistribution.com)

GRIDE – "[1996-2003]" CD

Sweet Jesus, my prayers be answered—a full 49-song discography of one of the best and most underrated grind bands ever: the Czech Republic's GRIDE. Fuck yes! This should be absolutely mandatory for any fan of the genre. GRIDE's hyper-kinetic take on the style, with ultra-fast whiplash-inducing start-stop changes, irregular arrangements, full-on blasting, and excellent shouted hardcore vocals in their native Czech tongue is one of the most original, creative, damaging and consistently brilliant the genre has known. Included here are their splits with MRTVA BUDOUCNOST, COCKROACH, and MALIGNANT TUMOUR, plus plenty o' covers (INFEST, RUPTURE, etc.), comp tracks, EP tracks, old tapes, as well as 11 brand new songs (released on a one-sided 12") that are somehow their best material yet. The new tracks are so fucking insane I can barely sit still. Songs change direction every five seconds, they're impossibly fast and technical and have gotten seriously bizarre: off-time arrangements and weird recording tricks make their already complex songs just otherworldly. I won't stop gushing like the dork fan-boy I am until GRIDE graces every zine cover across the land and I can then start the backlash about them not being as good as they used to be. Till then... get this! (EL)
(Plazzma, c/o Petr Frinta, Mensikovska 8/1238, CZ 160 00 Prague 6, CZECH REPUBLIC, plazzma@centrum.cz)

HALF PRICE – "Taking Life Seriously" CD

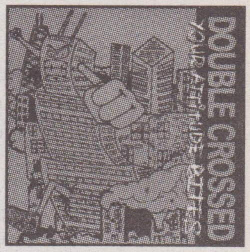
Juvenile punk from (it appears) South Africa. Kind of Fat Wreck Chords fare, which isn't necessarily a bad thing. Some of the songs have really lengthy breakdowns, but on the (w)hole it's not bad. Harmless... there you go, it's harmless. (AD)
(Red Ambulance, www.redambulance.org)

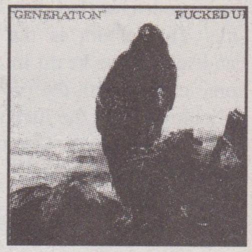
HAERVAERK – "Besat Af Blod" LP

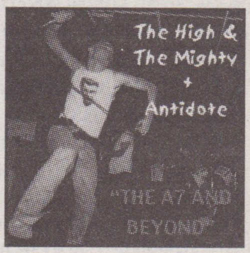
Translated: Vandalism – Obsessed by Blood! These Danish punks put together a fine package with an eight-page booklet and some translation of the song titles. Musically, HAERVAERK play straight-ahead, no-frills, 80s-style punk rock. They match it with straight-ahead, no-frills explanations to political and social themes. Their dual female/male vocals are impassioned and straight, free of wailing and screeches. This could be right outta 1982. Good release. (HM)
(www.haervaerk.tk)

HANNA HIRSCH – "Open Sky/Fireworks in Daylight"

Look out SMALLTOWN, I may just have a favorite new band from Sweden. I haven't checked my box yet, but if there's a copy of this in there I'm going to have to go out and







finally buy a new needle for my record player. On the little handwritten note that accompanied this it says, *"Hi, we're a band from Sweden. We listen a lot to Blondie and Discharge."* How can you go wrong there? The music defies pigeonholing, but I guess you could call it straightforward melodic punk; it has great soaring harmonies, a solid wall of fuzzy guitars, nice catchy hooks, and good singing. They remind me a little of SUPERCHUNK but maybe I'm crazy. I'm distraught over the fact that there is only two songs...these guys better release an album. DIY too, by golly. (AD)
(www.hannahirsch.com)

HATEMAIL KILLERZ – "Pipebombs and Anthrax" LP

Spastic hardcore punk with nihilistic and pissed vocals from the land of CAPITAL PUNISHMENT (Fresno, CA). This has a captivating, shitty sound quality that lends itself perfectly to the screeching guitar mayhem, blasting drums, and agonized vocals that take us on a wild journey through 36 anger-driven tracks of sheer thrash atrocity. Smokin'. (BS)
(Six Weeks, 225Lincoln Ave, Cotati CA, 94931)

THE HEARTATTACKS – "Here Comes..." LP

While I would normally consider it a huge offense to liken a band to TEENGENERATE, these Swedes are clearly trying awful damn hard to push me toward that very conclusion. Sure, there are certain intangibles that mere mortals simply can't mimic, and they're certainly not in the same league, but they still end up on the plus side. This album is the best homage to that band/sound I've heard in quite some time. They come closest with the production, which is suitably blown right the fuck out and ends up saving a few iffy moments. Great record…and probably long gone by now. (MC)
(P.Trash, Dornbuschweg 10, 33649 Bielefeld, GERMANY)

THE HIGH & MIGHTY/ANTIDOTE – "The A7 & Beyond" CD

Not to be confused with the ANTIDOTE *Thou Shalt Not Kill* CD that came out not too long ago, this release contains different material. You will find a demo and two live sets by THE HIGH AND THE MIGHTY and a live set and a few tracks from ANTIDOTE after the guy from THE HIGH AND THE MIGHTY started singing for them. (Keep in mind all of this material is from 1984). For what it is worth, the live tracks are pretty decent, but you should get this CD for those eight HIGH AND THE MIGHTY demo songs. Those things fucking smoke! If they had actually made it onto vinyl, people would be seeking it out like all the other legendary NYHC EPs from the early 80s. Oh, and the "extra" ANTIDOTE tracks from 1984 and 1991 are total garbage. I guess they wanted to add them on for the fans!?! (RC)
(Grand Theft Audio, 501 Glen Oaks Blvd, PMB 313, Glendale, CA 91202)

HORFIELD SC – "Chromosome" EP

This is a strange one. The first song is kind of French techno-punk, with really sterile sounding riffs over what could almost be drum-machine beats, with samples in place of vocals. The next song is more straightforward but still really sterile sounding. Turning over the record, the first song on the flip is melodic and could almost be considered emo. It's also the only song on the disc with an element of originality or any energy whatsoever. The EP is rounded out with a pretty boring cover of one of the greatest songs ever written, "Teenage Kicks." Nothing to get too excited about, I'm afraid. I hate to be so down on something that's not actually really bad, especially when it sounds as unique as this (compared to anything else I've listened to in the past month), it's just not that good. (AM)
(Hortfield SC, 54 Bd. Daguerre, 42100 Saint-Etienne, FRANCE. www.hortfield-sc.com)

IRON LUNG / SHANK – split LP

In this reviewer's humble (and somewhat biased) opinion, one of the finest sounding live power-violence hardcore bands, IRON LUNG, continues to astonish, kicking out caustic riffs with some of the most lethal delivery around. The production on this really does IRON LUNG justice in translating their incredibly crushing live sound into the studio setting. If you haven't seen IRON LUNG live, you are missing out! The SHANK side is one of the more cohesive collections of songs from these blokes. Good powerful stuff, although the BAD BRAINS cover didn't cut it for me. Still, this is my favorite SHANK release. Hope to see these fellas in future groups (RIP). If for the IRON LUNG side alone, this is destined to be glued to many a turntable. A great fucking record. (BS)
(Six Two Five, www.625thrash.com)

IS THIS REAL / THIS SHIP WILL SINK – split EP

IS THIS REAL had my hopes up with the WIPERS reference (not that I was dying to hear a third rate "WIPERS-style band"). But it turns out they are a actually a modern, youth-crew styled hardcore band in the vein of AMERICAN NIGHTMARE, BANE, or EMBRACE TODAY, flaunting their mp3 quality anthems on the vinyl format and therefore completely missing the point. They look like they're about sixteen-years old and really nice, which makes me feel like a real piece of crap, but what are you gonna do? They include a sappy note about the "state of their relationships" post break up, which is really sweet and just obliterates their hardcore image—at least in the traditional sense of the word. I guess these days its all about backslaps and social change—not that I was around to have seen anything different. On the flipside, THIS SHIP WILL SINK, previously featured in a *Heartattack* interview that left me nauseous and grasping for the Doritos bag lest I lose my lunch all over the backseat of Seth's van—mainly due to the amount of "discourse" and "self/scene-reflection" going on—is an emo hardcore band. They sound like the poor man's version of a hundred "math metal" and Ebullition bands that I never listened to because had I wanted to hear high-school level narratives about the state of the scene over SAETIA-style noodling. I would have gone to Gilman any given night in 2000 and taken my earplugs out. That said, both bands nail their respective styles pretty well. (WL)
(Cremo, PO Box 4754, Toma River, NJ 08754)

JABBERJAW - "The Bad Year EP" CD

Not to be confused with the old 1990-ish JABBERJAW, this band dishes out some tuneful pop punk not unlike BLINK or a slicker FIFTH HOUR HERO, fueled by good dual vocals and some nice drum chops. A good groove from a new band. (RL)
(Palantine, www.jabberjawmusic.com)

JOHNNY VOMIT AND THE DRY HEAVES – "Corinthian Leather, Genuine" EP

The JOHNNY VOMITS deliver a minimalist, rootsy slop-rock that is amusing. I appreciate their commitment to unrefined recordings by performing sloppily and ending songs by almost falling apart. I even like the fact that they seem to revel in goofy song titles like: "Big Black Boots and a Go-Go Butt," "Piss On Your Show" and "Where's That Band From North Carolina From?" Unfortunately, these guys didn't completely win me over. These guys ain't no JON WAYNE, but I'll keep an eye on future releases, because they have a lot of potential. (HM)
(Goner, johnny_vomit@sackheads.org)

JOHNNY VOMIT AND THE DRY HEAVES – "Corinthian Leather, Genuine" EP

Twenty years after their teenage existence, Goner brings us the reformation of Corinth, Mississippi's JOHNNY VOMIT AND THE DRY HEAVES. The band featured pre-famous JACK OBLIVIAN, JIMBO MATHUS of the SQUIRREL NUT ZIPPERS and the inimitable JOHNNY VOMIT. The band never played a show during their 1983-84 existence, but Goner was nice enough to introduce the world to their twisted take on punk rock with the "Chokin' On a Lude" single in the late 90s. Now they are back with three new songs recorded in 2004. Gone is the Moog synthesizer, but the band and JOHNNY VOMIT'S vocals still sound surprisingly the same. They may be older, but they certainly aren't that much wiser. (CK)
(Goner, 2152 Young Ave, Memphis, TN 38104)

JUXEBOX ZEROES – "Welcome to Rutsville" CD

"Static Static" starts off things on a note of caution: it's good-timey rock 'n' roll with tinkling keyboards, rote Johnny Thunders guitar riffs and plaintive lyrics —It's fun stuff, but doesn't MOTLEY CRUE sound like this in 2005? "Stutterstop" is a step in the right direction: buzzing, no-nonsense stuff that doesn't get bogged down in tiresome clichés. If the JUXEBOX ZEROES were on a juxebox I'd give 'em a spin, but overall this thing is a touch mainstream for my tastes. (JH)
(Do Not Use, www.juxeboxzeroes.com)

KLIMAX – "84-85" LP

Fantastic! Twenty mind-blowing tracks of classic Finnish hardcore from the vaults. KLIMAX released two songs, "Suvivirsi" and "Moscow," on the *84 Finnish Spunk Hard Beat* compilation, then (aside from recently surfacing on the *Killed By Finnish Hardcore* comp) dropped off the face of the Earth. This LP puts together two studio sessions of raging melodic HC from '84 and ´85 that'll have you foaming at the mouth—not a second of filler on here! Loud, raw, pissed, and tremendously catchy; their sound is more along the lines of APPENDIX and KOHU-63 than the harsher style the bigger names from the period were playing. Being a Finnish band in the 80s must have been just as much of a curse as it was a blessing. If KLIMAX had been from Sacramento, CA or Lawrence, KS they would have been impossible to ignore. (VH)
(Assel, Grener Landstr. 48, 37081 Gettingen, GERMANY, www.assel-records.de)

KLONOPIN – "Crude and Heartless" EP

Fast, over-the-top hardcore trash with a slight modern twist and the occasional breakdown. I couldn't get into this. Maybe I've just heard too many bands that try to play as fast as they can and sound like INFEST, ASSHOLE PARADE or CHARLES BRONSON without actually knowing how to write good songs to still get excited about stuff like this. Unfortunately, this is another one of those bands whose songs aren't really exciting or memorable but just extremely fast. The occasional solo or slower part doesn't come off as well thought-out and I honestly just can't get thrilled about this run-of-the-mill type band any more. The fact that I think the artwork is really ugly didn't help much either. Among the vast amounts of fast hardcore records that have been coming out over the past five years, this one just doesn't stand out at all. Sorry. Maybe I'm just starting to become a jaded old guy. (JD)
(PO Box 1833, Escondia, CA 92033 USA, www.geocities.com/klonopin666)

THE KNOW HOW - "Now In Technicolor" CD

Good ska-punk from Florida that reminds me of the early MIGHTY MIGHTY BOSSTONES. Cool horns, good guitar riffs and catchy tunes mix with good energy. Something fresh in a genre considered tired by many. (RL)
(Stomp Records, 78 Rachel, E. Montreal QC, H2W 1C6, CANADA, www.theknowhow.com)

LAKOTA - "Acquaintances" CD

These guys are dead ringers for the Bob Mould side of later HUSKER DU, as well as SUGAR. Being a Mould fan, I also like this... man, the vocals are dead on! Not as produced as the Mould stuff. OK, maybe a little ARMCHAIR MARTIAN. A good 5-song release, especially for Bob Mould fans. Like me. (RL)
(Pop Up, www.lakotarock.com)

THE LAMPS – "Rototiller" LP

This sounds downright evil. Plodding drums with a deep-voiced "singer". Actually, he grunts out the lyrics. The guitar feeds back once in while. All coming together in a glorious bunch of noise unlike anything I have heard for a while. This is music for when you are pissed off and truly need to be alone. Turn this up and don't worry about anyone bothering you. (CK)
(In The Red, PO Box 50777, Los Angeles, CA 90050)

THE LEGACY – "We Gave It Everything" CD

THE LEGACY is a band from England that has been around for a while now and *We Gave It Everything* is the follow-up to their debut CD from 2003. You'll find 6 songs of modern sounding straightedge hardcore on this CD that brings to mind AMERICAN NIGHTMARE, PANIC and the last COUNT ME OUT record. Both musically and layout-wise this release would have fit in well with most of the Bridge 9 Records back catalogue. If you're into bands like the ones mentioned above you should check this out, because this is pretty good for the genre. The long outro to the last track was completely unnecessary, but can easily be overlooked. (JD)
(Dead and Gone, 17 Driver Street, Sheffield S13 9WP, UK, www.deadandgone.co.uk)

MACHINE GUN ROMANTICS – "Everything So Far" CD

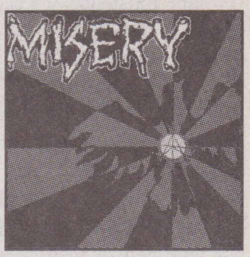
Really cool collection of 35 songs by this fast-core band from Texas. It includes their EP on 625 Records, their 2004 Tour CD-R, their demo and 12 live songs. I can usually do without live recordings of bands and this is no exception, but the regular songs on this CD are well worth your money. Lots of speed, lots of energy and lots of high-pitched vocals. The backing vocals sometimes remind me of SPAZZ. If you're into ultra-fast hardcore you probably already own the vinyl version of the EP, but it's cool to have all those tracks combined with the demo tracks and CD-R songs on one CD. Very highly recommended.(JD)
(Dangerously Small, 3532 Pinehurst, Plano, TX 75075)

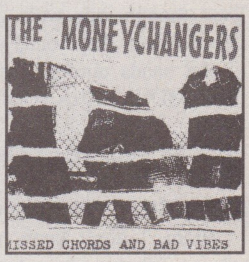
MANNIKINS – "Amalmatophilia: The First Two Albums on One CD" CD

26 tunes (each different!), some of which break the three-minute mark. Most shake to pieces after a minute and a half—the MANNIKINS are a shambles ("slaughterhouse," taken literally) and it's all I could have hoped for. Amalmatophilia contains textbook examples of snotty, belligerent teen punk, 60s-infused garage, rough-knuckled pop and honest-to-badness Scandi rock that sounds great and does not disappoint. They've got rough edges, but aren't afraid to dial it down a notch and play quiet when it suits the mood ("Get Up," for instance). The MANNIKINS aren't original, but have mastered their formula to the utmost degree. (JH)
(Screaming Apple, Düstermichstr. 14, 50939 Köln, GERMANY, www.screaming-apple-records.de)

THE MATICS – "The Matics CDEP" CD

I've been waiting for something new from these guys ever since I flipped out over their "Ignition" album some three or four (God, has it been *that* long?) years ago. From Chicago, these young'uns started where PEGBOY left off. Well written songs with great hooks and harmonies and a huge sound, their first album was even released on old NAKED RAYGUN front man Jeff Pezzetti's label, Jettison Records. If there's a hole in your life since RAYGUN called it quits then definitely check these guys out. This actual disc is more of a teaser than an actual bona fide new release, the bastards are going to make me wait even longer for that... It's basically a demo, released to let people know that they haven't fallen off the edge of the world, and you will have to make do in the meantime. Their sound is getting heavier—maybe away from PEGBOY like anthems and more into PANTHRO U.K. UNITED 13/BLACK COUGAR SHOCK UNIT rocky dirge territory. That's cool, but I hope they don't totally abandon the feel good pop hits. (AD)
(World, mailthematics@yahoo.com)





MIDNIGHT EVILS – "Breakin It Down" CD

This disc has you reaching for the Pabst after about a minute of the first track. If this ain't beer-drinking music, I don't know what is. Imagine if good old time 50s rock 'n' roll hit the MC5 head-on and then the result was mixed by the master knob twiddler Tim Kerr in a shed. The end result? Eleven beer soaked rock 'n' roll blazers. Sure it has touches of *Destroy Oh Boy*-era NEW BOMB TURKS, but it has enough of its own blues/rock 'n' roll charm to make it original and compelling on its own terms. I'll get another beer shall I? Don't mind if I do. (TB)

(Estrus, PO Box 2125, Bellingham, WA 98277)

MISERY – "Next Time / Who's the Fool…" CD

A collection of old and previously out-of-print material from these long-running Minneapolis crust legends. This compiles the full *Who's the Fool…the Fool is Silence* LP released in '95, their tracks from the split 7" picture disc with ASS-RASH from '96, the *Next Time* EP including the B-side "Midnight" and an additional unreleased track from the same session back in '88 with the original line-up that still sounds utterly apocalyptic. I don't know if it's the influence of the live photo in the booklet depicting their bassist rocking a BC Rich Warlock, but I discerned a bit of BOLT THROWER in their growly, metallic, AMEBIX-style crust. Or maybe it's just because they're insanely heavy and pissed and devastating at what they do. Definitely check this out if, like me, you missed out the first time. (EL)

(Profane Existence, www.profaneexistence.com)

THE MOJOMATICS – "A Sweet Mama Gonna Hoodoo Me" CD

THE MOJOMATICS are an eclectic duo that deliver mostly energetic 60s rhythm and blues, chipper country blues and groovin' swamp blues, but they push the boundaries with integrating both modern and roots styles. The muffled vocals and minimalistic instrumentation add a gritty old-school edge. At times they remind me of SWAMP TRASH with BEATLES harmonies. Other times they remind me of THE SONICS with PFFFFTH in their pants. Truly fresh, bizarre, and awesome! An excellent disc. (HM)

(Alien Snatch)

THE MONEYCHANGERS – "Missed Chords and Bad Vibes" EP

There are so many bad vibes on this record that I didn't even notice the missed chords. And what's punk rock without bad vibes after all? Even though they were going for a Killed By Death sound, they sound a lot fresher than most of the bands aiming thereabouts. Don't throw these MONEYCHANGERS out of the temple! (DD)

(4128 SE 24th Ave., Portland, OR 97202)

MOTHERFUCKERS - "Classless Society" CD

Hmm, I don't know what to make of this release. What we have here is that classic spiky hair sound mixed with some American oi stylings. Not unlike a rougher CASUALTIES. The weird thing is even with song titles like "Classless Society," "Enduring Freedom," and "Ordinary People," I would think the band would want to add something more than just a one-piece-of-paper insert. I don't know... lyrics? Then on the back of the CD are reviews of the band. If this is serious, then it is also pathetic. (JF)

(Dan Izzo, PO Box 1293 Stn M, Calgary, AB CANADA T2P 2L2)

MOUTHGUARD – "House of Stoush" CD

Tough hardcore from Down Under. Very much influenced by early AGNOSTIC FRONT and other old East Coast hardcore, this is pretty good, not too macho or metal. They mix things up nicely with plenty of variation in tempo and even throw in a twangy instrumental. They have Second World War-era Russian pictures and graphic art, and inside the cover it says "When involved in tactical tank battles MOUTHGUARD prefer to use T-34 tanks." Good choice. (AD)

(Round Three/Mouthguard, PO Box 105, Stone's Corner, QLD 4120, AUSTRALIA)

NIKMAT OLALIM – "Self Devouring Land"

While a lot of American "punks" have been busy talking shit on the Internet and listening to metal over the past few years, NIKMAT OLALIM have been pounding out intense hardcore punk in Israel! On this follow up to their *Battle Legacy* LP, N.O. deliver six devastating tracks of hard hitting, political (pro-Palestinian) Israeli hardcore punk with Hebrew and English vocals. The lyrics are great, and the record comes with a hefty insert that folds out into a poster. These guys are the real deal! Look for a split 10" with OI POLLOI to come in the future. (VH)

(Boshet, 44 Shabtai Negi St. apt. 2, Jerusalem 93825, Israel, www.gutzy.com/boshet)

NOFX – "Insulted By Germans/Fan Mail"

Part of the new monthly NOFX singles club thingy. The A-side is decent but nothing overwhelming. The flip is the DICKIES song, which is cool simply for being a DICKIES cover. If you love this band you should join the club to gather the many singles to come. (RL)

(Fat Wreck)

OFFENDERS – "I Hate Myself" EP

This is a reissue of a great record from 1984. From when I first heard this to now, I have found myself singing "I Hate Myself" at random moments for many years. This is a classic song that is memorable and intricately played. I never listened to the flipside as much, and I still lean to side A. Kangaroo just reissued their LP as well and did a nice job in doing so. There is new artwork provided, making this interesting and fresh visually—cool! (MS)

(Kangaroo, Middenweg13, 1098 AA Amsterdam, Holland, www.geocities.com/tysonkangaroo)

OFFENSIVE HERBST 87 – "Selsbtmord" 2xLP

I don't know if this early 80s German band has some sort of cult following, as this is the first I've heard of 'em, but there are apparently people who miss them enough to put out a double LP retrospective with 48 frickin' tracks. I say Germany 81/82, and the history-minded punk starts thinking of Rock-O-Rama and blitzkrieg-fast proto-hardcore with spikes scraping the sky, but these guys are not of that school. Pictures show guys in striped pants and hand-lettered shirts. They can't seem to play fast enough to break the speed limit, so they produce a very shaky buzzsaw punk topped with ragged-ass vocals that completely eliminate any possibility of looming saccharine tendencies. They would probably have arched a back or two at the time for my saying so, but their basic approach would come off as "arty" if attempted these days, a deliberate pose. This is a truly teenage garage punk band playing at the absolute maximum of their ability, and the results are an occasionally entertaining mess. Some filler, but a single LP of this stuff would be as killer as any DER DURSTIGE MAN record you could name. All info in German, pity. (RW)

(Phenomenal)

OFFENDERS – "Endless Struggle" LP

Along with REALLY RED I've always seen the OFFENDERS as the unsung heroes of the Texas punk scene, so it's nice to see someone giving them the reissue treatment they deserve. This is their 2nd LP from 1985 and is their best stuff by far—fast, biting hardcore with spiteful lyrics that sounds like a less political, harder MDC with touches of MINOR THREAT, ARTICLES OF FAITH, and TOXIC REASONS. This LP should be legendary, up there with *Lullabies* by the BIG BOYS, or *Get It Away* by SSD. If you don't have this, pick it up and start learning some real hardcore history. My only complaint is that Kangaroo insist on doing their own take on the record artwork for what they reissue, and they are never as good as the originals. That minor annoyance aside this is essential. (TB)

(Kangaroo)

ONE HIDDEN FRAME – "Time to React" CD

This band recalls the worst parts of HOT WATER MUSIC, GOOD RIDDANCE, and KID DYNAMITE all at once. The Epi-Fat style production bums me out even more. I don't know what to do with stuff like this. If minor chords played over NOFX drumbeats tugs at your heartstrings, then by all means, do it—go for broke and mailorder this, but under no circumstances should I have to listen to it. (WL)

(On My Own, omo@lprhardcore.net)

OROKU / THE GAMMITS – split EP

OROKU from Kansas start off this split EP with three songs of crusty hardcore in the vein of all the well-known Portland bands. You know what to expect. The songs definitely have a kind of raw energy, but overall they lack in the origi-

nality department and don't really add anything to the genre. The recordings were apparently done in 30 minutes, and it shows. The sound is really muffled and is not really pleasant to listen to. On the other side you get four songs by THE GAMMITS from Brooklyn, NY. They play a straight up, melodic type of punk rock that reminded me of a rawer, trashier version of some of the bands on Fat Wreck or Lookout, like SCREECHING WEASEL or a more rock and roll version of AVAIL. The recordings, again, aren't that great, but overall THE GAMMITS seem pretty good at what they do, even though it's not really my thing. (JD)
(Noah Kelly, 1370 W. Prairie Ct., Olathe, KS 66061)

PAPER LANTERNS – "Love, Paper Lanterns" CD
PAPER LANTERNS plays pop punk in the style of MR. T EXPERIENCE, SCREECHING WEASEL, or THE RAMONES. They do the style well, and have some really good hooks to boot. Their lyrics are pretty cheesy, but in a smart way. Check this out if the aforementioned bands are some of your favorites. (WL)`
(Throttle Style, www.throttlestyle.com)

THE PARTISANS – "Idiot Nation" LP
To be honest, I never paid too much attention to THE PARTISANS, beyond hearing the ubiquitous song "Police Story" turn up on several comps over the years. I approached a new album from them with the same mild trepidation one would regard any recently-recorded output from a second-wave punk band, never mind one from Wales. I'm glad to report I'm pleasantly surprised and even a little overwhelmed. These veterans (although they were mere babies when the aforementioned "Police Story" single was released in 1981 so they'd hardly be old codgers now) kick the arse of any current power pop-tinged BUZZCOCKS/CLASH rip offs doing the rounds presently. It's unfortunate that they have a song about reality TV (that subject, along with the Internet, should be henceforth regarded as lyrically off-limits. I mean come on…) but on the whole this record is a winner. Catchy, well-played punk rock with hooks and choruses aplenty. Let me just say this—if someone played you this and told you it was out-takes recorded between the first Clash LP and *Give 'Em Enough Rope*, you'd probably fall for it. It might be a bit poppy for older fans clinging to their rep as "the thinking man's Oi band" (they were never really Oi, despite Gary Bushell's patronage), but it's fine by me. (AM)
(Dr. Strange, PO Box 1058, Alta Loma, CA 91701)

PEELANDER Z - "Dancing Friendly" CD
PEELANDER Z just came through and brought their crazy live show and slayed the crowd. Unfortunately the basis of their live energy is through their crazy costume and goofy antics, and those things just don't translate to this CD. No two songs on this CD sound alike. In fact it, most songs don't even sound like they are sung by the same band. All styles of punk and hard alternative are covered here, just none of them good. (JF)
(Eat Rice Records, www.peelanderz.com)

PINK LINCOLNS - "Background Check" CD
A singles, demos, live tracks (and so forth) collection from this Florida band from the late 80s to now. Always in good company comparisons with THE QUEERS and SCREECHING WEASEL, this is a good collection for fans who couldn't track down every comp and single. (RL)
(Hazzard, 1941 Harding Street, Clearwater, FL 33765, www.pinklincolns.com)

PRIDEBOWL – "Drippings of the Past" CD
Re-release of these Swedes' 1996 full-length, with the *Long Distance* six-tracker as an extra bonus. They do the whole NOFX speedy melodic thing, much like countrymen RANDY and NO USE FOR A NAME used to do. It's fine enough, if you like that sort of thing. (RK)
(Bad Taste, www.badtasterecords.se)

PROJECTILES – "Hangin' Out" LP
Another retro-60s band from the1980s gets a renewed lease on life and posterity courtesy Screaming Apple. Kinda standard 60s garage done as folk did it in the 80s (we're entering into a weird realm here). Fierce stuff if you've got the interest, liked the CYNICS in their day, or are related to the group. (JH)
(Screaming Apple, Düstermichstr. 14, 50939 Köln, GERMANY, www.screaming-apple-records.de)

THE PROZACS – "Monsters Night Out" CD
Very Sonic Iguana sounding band from Springfield, MA. This is their second release (it's more of an EP than an album) and if you like all things SCREECHING WEASELly, then you may very well like this. They are actually a good bit better than the hordes of similar bands out there. (AD)
(Cheapskate, 297 Stoodley Pl., Schenectady, NY 12303)

QUILL / I DON'T CARE – "Split Album: Greatest Sound Package" CD
Holy crap—QUILL has got to be one of the most singularly energetic, manic and bizarre hardcore bands I've heard in quite some time. Two vocalists trade off the most absolutely whacked-out institutionalized screaming while the rest of the band switches gears so often between catchy rocking parts, full-on grindcore and noisy atonal jitters-and-starts, you're beaten fully into blissful submission by song three. The frenetic schizophrenia brings to mind classic BOREDOMS even, but mixed with the power of a full-throttle hardcore/grind six-piece. I DON'T CARE can't help but pale in comparison, but they're still plenty powerful. They've got a few more rock 'n' roll breather moments but they still blast away in true power violence form the rest of the time. A fucking superb match of incredible hardcore from Japan. (EL)
(625, www.625thrash.com)

RADIO REELERS - "Runnin Out" EP
This band likes to bill its self as "Genuine San Francisco Rock 'n' Roll" and as "San Francisco's Only Rock 'n' Roll Band." Well I am glad to state that neither are true, 'cause otherwise San Francisco would have been stuck with the shittiest rock in the country. And really, since the early 60s this town has given the world stuff with far more imagination. That being said, this EP isn't really bad, it's just not good. Boring, unimaginative rock in a sort of the simple Rip Off or Screaming Apple vein, with not as much snottiness. I was gonna state that they are really nice guys, but then you would know right off that the record isn't very good. (JF)
(Radio Records, PO Box 1452, Sonoma, CA 95476)

RANCID VAT – "We Hate You All the Way from Texas" CD
Another installment of Confederacy of Scum "scumrock" from these Texan good ol' boys. If LYNARD SKYNARD were into punk it would probably sound like this. Slow and

plodding like ANTISEEN and their brethren. It bored the fuck out of me, but I'm sure you'll know if you'll dig this. (TB)
(Steel Cage, PO Box 29247, Philadelphia, PA 19125)

THE RANDIES - "At the Friendship Motor Inn" CD

Decent power pop new wave stuff from this mostly girl group from LA. Although this disc isn't as solid as early MUFFS or TUULI it has its moments. Fans of the retro gal pop will dig this. (RL)
(Majestic Recordings, 6404 Wilshire Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90048, www.therandies.com)

RAT BASTARDS – "Subvert and Deny" EP

Fast paced, solid, cookie-cutter hardcore with a throaty, at times Brannon or Blinko-esque roar. Potentially heavy hitting song, but the tempos tend to defy, or in some cases blow, the hooks. Syncopated vocals over the riffs makes this drag in places as well. The BATTALION OF SAINTS cover unfortunately doesn't measure up to the original. (BS)
(Kangaroo, Middenweg 13, 1098 AA, Amsterdam Holland, www.geocities.com/tysonkangaroo)

RATTUS – "Ratcage" CD

A violent onslaught of Scandinavian rage from hardcore titans RATTUS. This official reissue (also available as a limited LP) brings us their self-titled fourth LP, originally released on Ratcage Records in 1984, along with their 1985 *Ihmiset On Sairaita* EP. Slightly metallic but not yet to the point of full-blown speed-metal, the material on this CD isn't as mind-blowing as *Uskonto On Vaara* or their other early works, but they're still delivering heavy doses of the harsh, raw, drunken fury they became famous for. Without a doubt, a Finnish HC classic! (VH)
(ZCM Records c/o Josef Loderer, Wasgenring 60, CH-4055 Basel, Switzerland)

THE REVLONS – "The Searcher" EP

Sometimes, I just don't get it. Don't get me wrong, this is a fine record. What I don't get is why somebody is taking the time to re-issue an EP that was originally issued around 1997 or 1998 and then do it in a run of 150. What's the fucking point? In an extremely rare, hand-written note that was only included in a very few of the reissues, they claim that this is more "rock" than the band's previous "mod/skin/punk" days. Bullshit. This is raw, hardcore style punk rock that is remarkably original, except for the Jello Biafra-ish lyrics. (KK)
(The Dust Collective, 1120 Chestnut St. SE, Olympia, WA, 98501)

THE REAL BAD NEWS – "Black and White and Red All Over" LP

A refreshing and often amusing take on frat rock, with a whole lot of influence from the pre-British Invasion Northwest Sound: I'll bet these guys listen to the VICEROYS' *Back To Granny's Pad* LP at least once a week. Or something. Strong originals ("I Hate Fords") with some well-chosen covers (KINGSMEN's "Long Green" turned into an ode to Krispy Kreme, FARON YOUNG's "Hello Walls" made to roll). (DD)
(Screaming Apple, Dustemichstr. 14, 50939 Koln, GERMANY, www.screamingapple.de)

RENTOKILL – "Back To Convenience" CD

Guys with guitars from somewhere create punk-styled music that sounds like RANCID meets NOFX. They kick out fourteen originals and one RANCID cover. Vague political imagery is probably conveying something about the state of the world to me, the listener. Not bad, not great. They nail the style pretty well. (WL)
(Engineer, 210 William St, Boonton, NJ 07005, www.engineerrecords.com)

RETCHING RED – "Get Your Red Wings" CD

So *this* is what Cinder from TILT is doing now? Wow, when did she get so pissed off? This rips! Full-bore femme fronted hardcore with tons of attitude, imagine if NAKED AGGRESSION weren't quite so squeaky and they were backed by STRYCHNINE. Hard as fuck. (TB)
(Bleeding Britch, 4096 Piedmont Ave #216, Oakland, CA 94611)

ROOKIE – "A Lot to Live" CD

A dozen pretty darn fine tracks of rather accomplished pop punk. They run the gamut from the gritty end of SCREECHING WEASEL, to the smoother early GREEN DAY sound, and they do it all real good. Me likes very much. (RK)
(Pickup, www.pickup-records.com)

SAFE INSIDE – "The Anthem" EP

High energy, hook-laden hardcore thrash with tone and dynamics along the lines of modern contemporaries ETA, DAS OATH or CUT THE SHIT. Lyrics grapple personal politics like peer pressure, caring, scene politics, and trying fit in; no new ground broken, but does that matter? Hell no! This still accounts for many of the greatest bands in hardcore. SAFE INSIDE wails out 14 maniacal tunes with relentless fervor to leave you thirsty and miserable, always wanting more. (BS)
(Black Matter, PO Box 666, Troy, NY 12181,www.blackmatterrecords.com)

SATAN'S RATS – "What a Bunch of Rodents" CD

Tremendous CD discography of this UK band known only to spotty collector geeks and the seven people who actually bought their 7"s back in the late 70s. Definitely a B-list band of the time, their 7"s command top dollar mostly for their scarcity, rather than listen-ability. That being said, this is a damn good listen, containing all three 7"s and a bunch of demos with a real pub/pub rock bent. I'm sure these cats have turned up on a *Power Pearls* comp. The third 7" is the best of the bunch with the rousing "You Make Me Sick." Some of the later demo gear is total wimpy shit, but the first ten tracks are great if you dig bands that sound like EDDIE AND THE HOTRODS. (TB)
(Overground, PO Box 1NW, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, NE99 1NW, UNITED KINGDOM)

SHE DEVILS / BRAINERDS – split CD

This Argentinean punk split contains eight songs each from two female bands! Both bands have songs in both Spanish and accent-less English. The SHE DEVILS play a mid-tempo pop punk similar to THE EYELINERS. They incorporate cover tunes by THE LAZY COWGIRLS, THE MISFITS and THE UNDERTONES. The BRAINERDS are very similar with rawer vocals and an overall harder sound. The version of "We Want the Airwaves" has the BRAINERDS own twists and style. Very cool. (HM)
(Rastrillo, c.c. 71, 1852, Bs As ARGENTINA, www.rastrillorecords.com.ar)

SHOTPOINTBLANK – "Heart of a Disbeliever" CD

Straight up hardcore with a thick metallic edge and an occasional hint of melody. These guys are from Australia, but would fit nicely on a split record with HATEBREED or TERROR. If that genre is your thing, then this is definitely worth checking out. (RC)
(Surprise Attack, 2601 Peach St., Erie, PA 16508, surpriseattackrecords.com)

SINCE THE DAY – "El Mensajero No Es Importante" CD

Yet another excellent entry in the pantheon of great German metalcore outfits. I know it's lame to group the whole country's output as one, but seriously, they got something good going on over there that doesn't get replicated here. Even when they're treading fairly familiar territory like the melodic AT THE GATES thing, SINCE THE DAY add something unique and avoid clichés. They have a demonically heavy de-tuned guitar sound, and really go a step beyond in the evil riff department. The likes of IRE (especially vocally) and DAY OF SUFFERING came to mind. They mostly keep to a slow- to mid-pace. I suppose it says something about their songwriting skill that I still liked them despite the lack of speed, as does the fact that they're one of the few—if not only—bands that pulls off (occasional) clean singing without ruining their songs. That is a true rarity. (EL)
(Bastardized, PO Box 200521, 56006 Koblenz, GERMANY, www.bastardizedrecordings.de)

SKIRMISH – "The Crooked and the Cavalier" CD

The first track of this CD is a kind of melodic hardcore. The second song starts off with a strong NYHC feeling and then changes into a melodic part with emo vocals. I don't know but it seems to me that this is another really bad attempt at mixing melodic hardcore with a tough-guy sound and

song structures. I had a really hard time even sitting through this entire CD because it is so obvious that these guys from Britain have no idea how to write a decent song. All the songs come across as a collection of bad parts pasted together. Don't even get me started on the fourth song which is really bad pseudo-Nu Metal tune with metal riffing and a rap-metal vocal delivery. This whole CD made me cringe again and again. Even the anti-war lyrics in one of the songs couldn't save this for me. I couldn't stand it. (JD)
(Watford Last Chance, www.watfordlastchance.com)

SLAANESH – "Exitus Acta Proba" CD
French dudes come up, for some bizarre reason, with a really odd death metal/satanic/hokey CD sleeve and packaging. I've no idea why, as they look like a trio of grubby skinheads/street punks. They play dirty French street-punk music too. Somewhat akin to a gruff freedom-fries version of the first EXPLOITED record. (RK)
(Mass Productions, www.massprod.com)

SLAPSHOT - "Tear It Down" CD
Legendary Boston hockey maniacs SLAPSHOT are back with six fierce new tracks of cut-throat, old-school hardcore. It's no *Step On It*, but fans won't be disappointed. They're definitely keeping the energy alive. You can't argue with songs like "Fuck New York," "Rap Sucks" and "Hardcore Rules". The enhanced CD video footage is fantastic. I really got a kick out of the "Making of" segment. Too bad they couldn't fit that Paul Newman movie on... (VH)
(Thorp, PO Box 6786, Toledo, OH 43612, www.thorprecords.com)

SLICKS – "My Household Remedy"
Fuck yes! These Linkoping, Sweden bar rockers will burn your fucking ears off! The SLICKS have harnessed the denim demon that TURBONEGRO unleashed years ago and raised the ante. This is balls-to-the-wall hard punk rock with blazing guitars and deep guttural vocals. THE SLICKS assault you with a maniacal, high speed, blitzkrieg frontal attack. No prisoners taken! No quarter given! POISON IDEA would approve of this rough-hewn mayhem. Buy now, punk! (BR)
(Not Enough, Mailbox 1013, Lilla Kungsgata 2, 411 41 GBG, Sweden, www.not-enough-redords.cjb.net)

SMOKE OR FIRE – "Above the City" CD
Formerly known as JERICHO RVA, SMOKE OR FIRE plays mediocre melodic punk that resembles SMALL BROWN BIKE or STRIKE ANYWHERE. Basically, this is high school poetry sung in gruff voices over distorted electric guitars and such. Not a far cry from radio bullcrap like NEW FOUND GLORY, the main difference being that they "scream" their vocals instead of singing them. No. (WL)
(Fat Wreck Chords, PO Box 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119-3690)

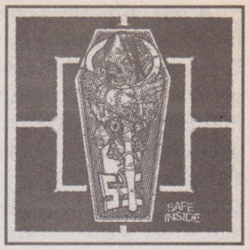
SNAKEBITE – "Every Bad Idea Is a Good Idea" EP
Reality TV celebs dispatch four sharp kicks to the head and face. No bullshit rippers from the early 80s school of US hardcore. For modern comparisons think TEAR IT UP, BALANCE OF TERROR, or SLEEPER CELL. This type of gear was two-a-penny a couple of years back, but this disc stands head and shoulders over most of what I've heard coming out of this scene in recent times. (TB)
(Don Giovanni, PO Box 15482, Boston, MA 02215)

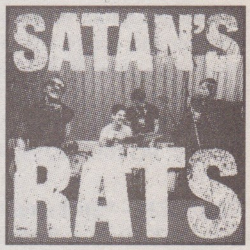
SNITCHES GET STITCHES – "I Liked You Better When You Were a Corpse" CD
Lumpy 'n grungy get together and make an unholy racket that reminds me of bands like FITZ OF DEPRESSION or some other mid-90s indie group that you can never nail by memory alone. They are not bad at what they do, which is a grab-you-by-the-throat indie-punk, but it ain't what makes me dance around. Too serious at the wrong moments and not original enough to encourage repeat listens. (RW)
(Empty, PO Box 12301, Portland, OR 97212)

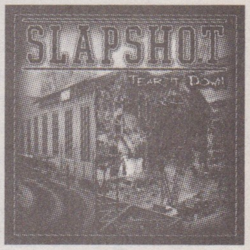
SQUARE THE CIRCLE – "Satisfaction" EP
Kangaroo Records nails it again with this six-song release from Japan's SQUARE THE CIRCLE. They step away from the "Japanese sound" and go for more of a straight up USA/East Coast hardcore sound fitting nicely between the styles of bands like WRECKAGE and STRAIGHT TO HELL. This is fast, wild, and aggressive, and something tells me these guys are great live. (RC)
(Kangaroo, Middenweg 13, 1098 AA, Amsterdam, HOLLAND)

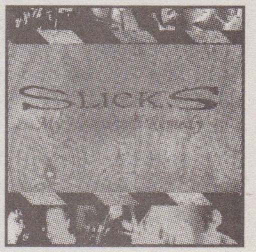
SS DECONTROL – "The Kids Will Have Their Say" LP
Before I dive into this review, I want to let everyone know that this is a bootleg, so the recording is muddy, and the speed is a little on the slow side. That being said, this is the debut record by the quintessential Boston straight edge powerhouse known as SS DECONTROL. Along with their second 12", *Get It Away*, this record has had an immeasurable impact on every straight edge hardcore/punk band that has come after it. Innumerable riffs, lyrics, and layout designs have been borrowed from this record. Aesthetically, SS DECONTROL and the rest of the Boston Crew brought forth a basic, no frills, suburban hardcore look that consisted of jeans, Nikes, sleeveless t-shirts, and sweatshirts. Musically, the diverse tempo changes and stellar drumming, along with Springa's trademark raucous growl, make *The Kids Will Have Their Say* an instant hardcore classic. Of course, not everyone sang this record's praises in 1982. At the time, many in the punk scene branded SS DECONTROL's ideals and stage presence as too militant or too aggressive. But like all geniuses who are misunderstood by their unapprised (read: boozed-out) contemporaries, SS DECONTROL was busy setting the blueprint for the in-your-face, unapologetic, straight edge sound and attitude, changing the way hardcore would be played forever. Whether you think they contributed or deducted from the punk scene is your prerogative, but when all is said and done, and the drums kick in to "Headed Straight," you're fucking moshing. (CC)
(no address)

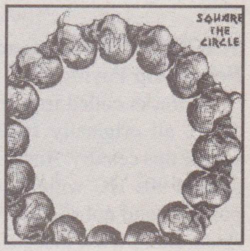
SS DECONTROL – "Get It Away" 12"
This is what looks like an extremely realistic re-release of SS DECONTROL's 1983 release on Xclaim records, though I've not had a chance to compare it to my copy for the details. (*The Kids Will Have Their Say* is out concurrently.) Needless to say, this is classic Boston HC at its peak period—flailing guitars and gravel-voiced to the very edge of laryngitis. "Under the Influence" is an astonishing, compressed burst that may be their best song ever, though their abrasive cover of the BUZZCOCKS' "No Reply" shows they can remake a classic on their own terms. If you don't have it, do get this record. (SS)
(no address)











STATUES - "Aux." CD
A mix of punky pop with a little new wave tossed in, but done with a pounding rocking feel. Under-produced stuff that almost reminds of 80s groups like THE NEIGHBORHOODS and SQUEEZE. A good sound with strong tunes and good enough vocals. A strong solid disc from this Canadian combo. (RL)
(Pelado Records, www.statues.ca)

STRAIGHT TO HELL – "Discography '02-'04"
Glass gargling vocals backed by a steamroller, they remind me of Clevo no-hopers the H-100s ,who were themselves inspired by the greatness of GAUZE, GISM, and the like. 24 tracks of caustic mayhem. (TB)
(Gloom, PO Box 14253, Albany, NY 12212)

STRIKER – "Spekukantsvinet" CD
STRIKER is a Swedish hardcore band that doesn't stray too far from the model set up by their forbearers in CRUDE SS and SOD, though they have a decidedly modern feel to their sound. Featuring members of RÖVSVETT, this second disc by these scene veterans is thoroughly competent Swedish thrash, though they don't nearly take it to the level of being an all time classic. Like RÖVSVETT, it seems that STRIKER is doomed to being a second tier Swedish hardcore band. Though, as I've mentioned before, being a second tier Swedish hardcore band is not such a bad thing really, and when this band accelerates into full-bore thrash they do it pretty well. My biggest complaint is that this is a CD-only release, which may make me seem like a broken record (har har), but vinyl remains the truest way to listen to this kind of music, and it seems like I've been reviewing a lot of Swedish stuff on CD only lately. The pixilated fonts don't help matters any, nor does the computerized artwork. This would certainly get by on its charm more on a punker format with more personalized art. (GN)
(Six Weeks, 225 Lincoln Avenue, Cotati CA 94931)

STRYCHNINE - "Born In A Box" CD
Oakland's STRYCHNINE come through with another disc of their brand of drunken East Bay punk. With an ode to early 80s UK punk combined with a dash of the harder side of the East Bay of the late 80s, STRYCHNINE has produced an enjoyable but not great disc. On the plus side, I love any song that makes fun of nazi punk or skins. (JF)

SUICIDE FILE – "Some Mistakes You Can Never Stop Paying For" CD
18 tracks culled from various 7"s, splits and a demo; all originally appearing in the, er, early part of this century. Angry bursts of chugga-chugga mid-90s HC with shouty vocals. Pissed and political, and not so bad. (RK)
(Indecision, www.indecisionrecords.com)

SUNPOWER - "John Terror" EP
I think one of the great things that has happened in the last couple of years has been those that have discovered the joys of early 80s American hardcore, and the bands that have drawn inspiration from it. Let the bands from the early 90s take the chugga chugga hardcore to the Ozzfest, cause bands like SUNPOWER, VITAMIN X, and such will take it too the dingy clubs and basements. SUNPOWER on this EP pull off the whole SSD-/MINOR THREAT-style thing quite well. A winner. (JF)
(Deviant, www.deviantrecords.tk)

TARAKANY! – "Freedom Street" CD
Driving melodic hardcore, So-Cal style. Y'know, LAGWAGON, FACE TO FACE... except, er, they're from Russia. They sing in a mixture of Russian and English, and do it pretty good. Lyrics are thoughtfully translated too, for the non-Cyrillic script readers amongst you. (RK)
(Zurich Chainsaw Massacre, www.zurichpnkconnection.com)

TAR BABIES – "Face the Music/Respect Your Nightmares" CD
This cool CD compiles the TAR BABIES' first two EPs along with some unreleased stuff, tracks from splits, etc. It clearly illustrates their transition from BLACK FLAG/TEEN IDLES wannabes to funk-punk pioneers. While later records dipped a little too far into CHILI PEPPERS or BEEFEATER territory, this stuff is still full of angular, noisy, weird punk goodness. This is from a time when hardcore hadn't yet defined itself in such clear-cut terms, and bands like the MINUTEMEN, BIG BOYS, BUTTHOLE SURFERS, and SCRATCH ACID could rub shoulders with BLACK FLAG, THE NECROS, MINOR THREAT etc, and everyone had a good time. Of course, all of that could be fake nostalgia on my part—I didn't experience that American hardcore utopia first hand, but I've seen the flyers, maaaan… Anyway, a good release and worth the effort. (AM)
(Lexicon Devil, PO Box 125, Richmond, VIC 3121, AUSTRALIA. Lexdev@yahoo.com.au)

TARGET NEVADA – "No, We Don't Want to Play Your Shitty Fest" CD
What can I say? It seems that this band goes out of its way to not make me like this record. The artwork that accompanies it, for starters, is really ugly. The music isn't good and judging from the lyrics, song titles and the title of the CD, they try to be sarcastic in that kind of cynical way that only very few bands can pull off. Good examples of bands that did it successfully were CHARLES BRONSON, BORN AGAINST or GUYANA PUNCHLINE. Hell, even GOOD CLEAN FUN was funny the first time. But when this band does it it comes off as juvenile and an easy score, and a small part of me even suspects them of not being completely joking. Their first song is a complaint against the lack of content in today's hardcore scene. Although that song actually makes sense to me lyric wise ("Now sheltered rich kids whine about ex-girlfriends so mosh it up, that is why we're here, right? Then hurry home to talk shit on messageboards all night"), it's a fact that mere cynical complaining about the hardcore scene, no matter how valid, has never changed anything. Furthermore, their critique seems void when they don't try to write meaningful songs themselves and titles like "Spring Break... (Shows Us Your Tits)" don't really prove to me that this band is the kind of addition to our scene that will save it. Actually, this band seems totally redundant, and musically their blend of metalcore is just too unexciting to even bother with. I hated this. Their song "Coed Naked Hardcore" starts off with the line "I'll sing the songs that no one wants to hear" and they're damn right. (JD)
(Surprise Attack, 2601 Peach Street, Erie, PA 16508, www.surpriseattackrecords.com)

TERRORIST OTHER – CD
Direct, scrappy, fixed-stare punk that is so skeletal it mostly leaves the vocals as the main instrument. That's pressure baby, but the lyrics hold up most of the time so you don't end up twisting restlessly as this plays. Still, the utterly basic approach means that the bones left bare must be interesting in themselves, and these are only marginally so. There is a great sense of integrity on this, but the result is a little half-baked for my taste. (RW)
(no address)

THINGS FALL APART – CD
Loud abrasive hardcore ala BORN AGAINST with melody and heart. Even though this isn't really my bag, man, I still like this. The tempo changes aren't too formulaic, and there's enough actual tuneage to keep it afloat. It's pretty punk rock too, y'know, not too... vegan, if you know what I mean. (AD)
(Crustacean, PO Box 829, Madison, WI 53701-829)

TODD – "Purity Pledge" CD
A quick glimpse of the grunge style photograph on the back cover should spark something in your brain as to what you may be in for. This is heavy, repetitive music with vocals that are screamed not sung. Reminds me of a cross between later MINISTRY and HELMET. (CK)
(Southern)

TRANSISTOR TRANSISTOR – "Erase All Name and Likeness" CD
TRANSISTOR TRANSISTOR, or T2 as they are also called, sound quite different on this record than I remembered them to sound. I must admit that they were never my favorite band and that the only records of this band that I own are their split LPs with WOLVES and LIGHT THE FUSE AND RUN. But I remember liking their songs and sound. This new record gives me a very similar feeling to the one I get when I listen to the new PLANESMISTAKENFORSTARS record; i.e., it feels like I'm listening to a completely dif-

ferent band. Like PLANES, T2 have strayed away from the more traditional emo sound that they used to be a lot closer to, and now they seem to venture far out into rock and post-rock territory. This record definitely has its moments and I have a hard time making up my mind about the record as a whole, but I can't say that I'm really blown away by this. Maybe it will grow on me after more listens, but for now I can't help but be annoyed by their new "rock-out" approach that so many other bands also seem to be taking today. I liked their old "emo" sound a whole lot better. (JD)
(Level Plane, www.level-plane.com)

TREE OF SNAKES – "I Am the Lion" EP
TREE OF SNAKES is fucking terrible and I have no idea what to do with them. This could be filed next to FOUR EYES, in that it is retarded, lo fi, satirical garage punk with songs entitled "Lion," "Sex and Drugs," and "Serious Knife Fight." And the lyrics don't go much farther than that, with words yelled or sputtered out in the style of a fourth grader who got a hold of a his parents dictaphone. Most likely a joke between friends, assumedly people who are religiously into bands like FROGS or WESLEY WILLIS. Act fast, it's limited to 500. (WL)
(Columbus Discount, www.Columbusdiscountrecords.com)

THE UGLY BEATS! – "Bring On the Beats" CD
The name might cause expectations of an attempt at gritty and/or outlandish neo-beat, but THE UGLY BEATS actually deliver well-crafted songs that owe more to BOBBY FULLER (with the addition of organ) than the CREATURES or MONKS. Not ugly at all, but pretty good. (DD)
(Get Hip, PO Box 666, Canonsburg, PA 15317, www.gethip.com)

UNHOLY GRAVE – "UK Discharge" LP
Yet another record, and yet another live record at that, from Japan's legendary grind stalwarts, UNHOLY GRAVE. The sound on this is decent enough, especially given that it's all from their drummer's mini-disc recorder, which might explain why you get a good deal of drum in the mix. This gatefold LP is from their tour of England a year ago, mostly from one show, and comes with an extensive tour diary insert, which I'll admit I just haven't had time to read. These guys always put a lot of obvious time and care into their releases, and that degree of personal touch goes a long way to raise this out of redundant collector fare and makes me still enjoy every U.G. record I hear. (EL)
(Rescued from Life, rflrecords@hotmail.com)

VÄÄRINKASITYS – "Sota-Äpärät" LP
Make space on your fucking leather or denim jackets punks! Now!!! This band is much deserving of your attention and paint marker. They brought us a really great EP a couple of years ago that only reached about 259 people. Now, we have a full length LP by this excellent Finnish band, which includes the difficult to find EP tracks. If you are a freak for old Finnish hardcore punk a la the 82-85 school, you must check this out. 30 songs in all and no disappointments. It's fast and aggressive hardcore punk, just the way we love it. (MS)
(Putrid Filth Conspiracy, Box 7092-200 42 Malmö, SWEDEN)

THE VACANCY – "Heart Attack" CD
No no *no*! The VACANCY probably considers themselves a JAWBREAKER-inspired punk band. They are actually an ALKALINE TRIO-inspired rock band with even less tact than the aforementioned band. Sappy emo lyrics make me want to hurl. Pure genius. (WL)
(A-F, PO Box 71266, Pittsburgh, PA 15213)

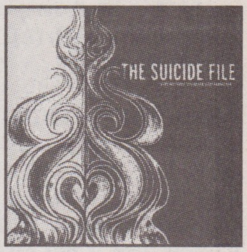
THE VALLEY – CD
Family-oriented grunge rock revivalist compositions by way of MUDHONEY and J MASCIS (DINOSAUR JR.), without the lyrical or musical edginess and frenetic energy that made the aforementioned palatable to punk listeners. (BS)
(The Swingline, PO Box 19712, Seattle, WA 98109, www.thevalleyrules.com)

VOGELFREI – "Stiefeljungs" CD
These dudes are German. They have less hair than I do, but rather more tattoos than Sara (you know Sara—the finest of the rather excellent bar staff at Slim's). They are a trio, and one of them can sing. Kind of like early BLITZ (albeit with the Germanic thing going on) or first couple of UK SUBS LPs. Mid-paced, melodic, gruff but sweet. It would appear to have come out in '99, and not be their only CD. But such is my German. (RK)
(Vogelfrei, PF 1412, 04860 Torgau/Elbe)

VOLT – "Sex Five Nun" LP
There is a quite a body of French electro-punk from the years 1978-84, with that irresistible accent essentially working as a counterpoint against a coldly harsh industrial sheeting of fuzz guitar and robo-drums. Well, VOLT is the current standard bearer for the Second Wave of French Electro-Punk, and it is composed of LILI Z and her "collaborator" from the SPLASH FOUR. In keeping with the aesthetic of that day, they have put out two 12" "singles" for that maxi-bruising sonic impact. You know, like PIL's *Metal Box* impact? This one will be easier to find than their self-released debut, and anyone who gets off on NAZIS FROM MARS or CRASH NORMAL will seriously dig the variation they offer: less "wacky" than NAZIS and less computer-driven than the NORMAL boys. Plus, from the offered evidence, they seem to be a couple of pervs *extraordinaire* so plan on using this 12" as the soundtrack for your next random sexual encounter on the cement floor of your neighborhood meat locker. (RW)
(In The Red, PO Box 50777, Los Angeles, CA 90050)

WAR OF DESTRUCTION – "The Danish Collection" CD
Given the recent explosion of amazing bands like NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS, YOUNG WASTENERS, and GORILLA ANGREB coming out of Denmark, there's just no way not to be thirsty for more Danish greatness. So the timing of this 48-track assault of mid-80s Danish punk mayhem is perfect. This scorching CD reissue includes the *Nazisvin* single that Kick 'n' Punch reissued, their *De Dodes Hvisken* LP, plus compilation and rehearsal tracks from '83-'86. If you're new to 80s Danish HC, I'd recommend checking out the recent ENOLA GAY LP reissue before picking this up, but it's all great stuff! (VH)
(Grand Theft Audio, 501 W. Glenoaks Blvd, PMB 313, Glendale, Ca 91202)

WEAK – "Back from the Gooch" CD
They are not from here. Nowhere near, I'd wager (France, I guess). The WEAK sound, to these bent ears, like a half-speed TV KILLERS minus some of the Xerox punkiness and plus metal-tastic guitar solos that worm up one side of the Catskills and down the other. Not the most interesting



thing to wind its way around the pike in recent years, though it's loud and strident in an ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN sense. Next… (JH)
(Mass Productions, 19 rue Malaguti, 35000 Rennes, FRANCE, www.massprod.com)

WESTERN DARK / BRUTAL KNIGHTS – split EP

Two shit-kickin' rock 'n' roll bands plough through a song each on this split. WESTERN DARK is the more rockin' of the two, BRUTAL KNIGHTS the punker. Both bands are good judging by this small sample. Think NASHVILLE PUSSY meets GBH. (AD)
(Classic Bar Music)

WHEN TIGERS FIGHT – "Fuck Tonight" CD

This band contains folks from THE SUICIDE FILE, THE PROMISE, and DAMNATION AD. With that said, these five songs are exactly what you would expect to hear from Indecision Records. This is fast yet overproduced hardcore that is very clean and crisp sounding, though surprisingly the music was still able to retain a solid crunch. I wanted to get into this, but it left me feeling a bit empty. Maybe their upcoming full length will be better. By the way, did you name the band after the ALONE IN A CROWD song? (RC)
(Indecision, PO Box 6052, Garden Grove, CA 92846, indecisionrecords.com)

WIPERS – "Complete Rarities: '78-'90" LP

This LP, a re-booting of an earlier bootleg originally released in 1993, compiles the WIPERS' 1978 3-song debut EP, tracks from various compilations, the B-side to their Romeo single, live tracks from two late-80s shows, and three songs from a solo acoustic set. Aside from tape woosh on some of the live stuff, the overall sound quality is good. For those unfortunate souls who are not intimately familiar with them, the WIPERS were one of Portland, Oregon's first and finest punk bands. Lead by the reclusive genius Greg Sage, the band took the RAMONES' blueprint of simple, pop-influenced punk rock and added a dark, desperate element, yielding some of the most urgent and compelling music ever recorded. Casual fans will enjoy this record for the early, tough to track down classics like "Better Off Dead" and "My Vengeance" and might not dig the later, more rock-influenced stuff, but for WIPERS fanatics (like myself) this LP is an essential purchase. It should be noted that this bootleg is legitimately available in its entirety on CD-R (for roughly half the price of the vinyl) on Greg Sage's website: www.zenorecords.com (CS)
(no address)

WISENHEIMER – "United States of Hysteria" EP

Total late 80s/early 90s throwbacks from Florida kick down a bunch of speedy retardo punk numbers. DAYGLO ABORTIONS/ ANGRY SAMOANS worship with a touch of Chicago pop at times (think: first SCREECHING WEASEL LP). I can't believe how 15 years ago this is! A welcome trip down memory lane. (TB)
(Bony Orbit, PO Box 237601, Cocoa, Florida 32923-7601)

WOLFPACK – "Mist of Morpheus / Bloodstained Dreams"

Feral Ward Records makes lovely work of this limited, two-song single from Swedish hardcore greats WOLFPACK. Recorded in 1995 before their *A New Dawn Fades* LP and before they changed their name to WOLFBRIGADE, this single features Jonsson of ANTI-CIMEX and SHITLICKERS fame on vocal duties. WOLFPACK took the template laid down by those classic Swedish hardcore bands and expanded it to incorporate a chunkier, more metallic wall of sound. It is safe to say that WOLFPACK—along with their peers in SKITSYSTEM—took more from the *Absolute Country of Sweden*-era of ANTI-CIMEX than from the early EPs, but the tell tale riffs and pounding D-beat are still there. For many, WOLFPACK/BRIGADE is a definitive Swedish hardcore band, and this single—which features textured, blood splattered artwork and two excellent songs—is a welcome addition to their extensive discography. (GN)
(Feral Ward, www.feralward.com)

V/A - "Belt Fighting the Man" DVD

A video of the 2002 tour of DILLINGER FOUR, TOYS THAT KILL, and RIVETHEAD. Fueled by the greatness of DILLINGER FOUR, this is raw camcorder footage of mostly live stuff and a bit of general tour wackiness. About five or so songs from each band, this runs about 30 minutes which is the only bummer. A good video that leaves you wanting more. (RL)
(Redemption Value, 1101 26th Ave. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414, www.redemptionvaluerecords.com)

V/A – "Best of NYC vol. II: Live at Continental" CD

This compilation features 23 live tracks all recorded at Continental Club in NYC. The heavy hitters on the comp are JOEY RAMONE, DEE DEE RAMONE, CHEETAH CHROME, LUNACHICKS, MURPHY'S LAW, TOILET BOYS and THE BOUNCING SOULS, but there are lots of mediocre rock bands as well. Actually the JOEY, DEE DEE and CHEETAH songs aren't terribly impressive either. I couldn't find the dates when these songs were recorded. I imagine some of the tunes were recorded late 1990s. The sound quality is good and the quirky versions of "Blitzkrieg Bop," "Commando" and "Love Song" might perk up some ears, but all in all I liked less than half the tunes. (HM)
(Continental NYC, www.continentalnyc.com)

V/A – "Breizh Disorder Vol. 4 - Petra Nevez E Bro An Drouized" CD

Overall, a killer compilation of France's finest in ska, nu metal, surf, and "punk." A mesmerizing listen. Fans of __________ (fill in the blank) check out EDWOOD!!! EDWOOD pack it all into their funky-rap-metal-core-introspective-space-jam-track "Swallow"—and boy does it. BSK unleash the more infectious rap-metal groove and swagger, complete with bite your lip breakdowns on this behemoth of a groundbreaking release. Fuck yeah!! I was left mesmerized. A cross-genre spectacular that will have you pumping your fists through the shallow commercial radio abyss. SOULFLY and HOOBASTANK eat your fucking hearts out. France is undergoing a serious underground music renaissance!!! Expect to see a lot more out these hot acts. Talent representatives are standing by, call now: 02.96.42.39.03 ... (BS)
(Mass Productions 19 Rue Malaguti, 35000 Rennes, France, www.massprod.com)

V/A – "California Thrash Demolition" CD

Not sure I even need to say anything about this incredibly comprehensive collection of all that the Golden State has to offer in the hardcore realms. The band list should speak for itself. This compiles the three Californian comp 7"s from the Barbaric Thrash series (two Northern, one Southern) plus almost as much again of new tracks from other bands, so it's worth your while to get this even if you already have the EPs. Too many good bands to list but, ah what the hell: FIND HIM AND KILL HIM, BURN YOUR BRIDGES, BLOODY PHONEIX, DESTRUCTION'S END, BROKEN NEEDLE, SCHOLASTIC DETH, LOOK BACK AND LAUGH, THIS IS MY FIST, FUNERAL SHOCK, UZI SUICIDE, BRUTAL DEATH, HOSTILE TAKEOVER, SCURVY DOGS, HUE & CRY, LOVE SONGS, and tons more. Damn… (EL)
(625, www.625thrash.com)

V/A – "Norrland D-Beat Compilation" CD

Damn, this is a fine compilation. It contains AMBULANCE, ANA BARATA, EARTH DIES SCREAMING, UNCLE CHARLES, REIGN OF BOMBS, URUH, 365 DAGAR AV SYND, AULTION, and HUMAN WASTE. And while not everything on here is totally mind-blowing, there are really no stinkers to be found. You can pretty much guess what to expect here by looking at the title of the compilation. Though I would have to say, the term D-Beat doesn't really fit a few of these bands. Nevertheless it is all fast and aggressive. And be sure to check out those UNCLE CHARLES tracks. They hit it fucking hard and fast and utilize three vocalists! Totally raging! (RC)
(Wasted Sounds, Skolgatan 110, 903 32 Umeå, SWEDEN, wastedsounds.com)

V/A – "Vancouver Complication" CD

The long overdue reissue of this comp of the Vancouver scene which came out in 1979. Included are tracks from DOA, POINTED STICKS, DISHRAGS, SUBHUMANS, K-TELS, as well as bonus CD tracks from RUDE NORTON and so on. As good a scene comp as you can find from the early punk/new wave movement, non-UK style. (RL)
(Sudden Death, Cascades PO 43001, Burnaby BC, V5G 3H0, CANADA)

DEMOS

Send all demos to: Erin Yanke, PO Box 1113, Portland,OR 97207. Please provide a postage paid price and a mailing address with your demo! Reviews by Erin Yanke & Peter Avery.

THE BAD IDEAS are part of the catchy, raw, melodic punk family of Milwaukee these days, but have a bit more melancholy in their mix, and a bit more post-punk. Mid tempo and lo-fi, with more singing and less yelling, and more standout guitar bits here and there (not solos). Good listening with friends and alone in your room. ($1 ppd. or HUSKER DU-influenced trade. 13 song cassette, no lyrics included. 2656 N. Booth St., Milwaukee, WI 53212.)(Erin)

BIG FUCKIN DEALS are also part of the raw, melodic punk family of Milwaukee, but their personal niche seems to be combining piano (toy piano?), horns, and other non-traditional punk instruments into their family mix. Some of it sounds like drunken good times, some like new wave disco. Singing style varies depending on the music, but I would say they specialize in ranting. (8 song cassette, no lyrics included. 2753 N. Pierce St., Milwaukee, WI 53212.)(Erin)

THE BOWLCUTS have a rabid fan that is willing to bootleg their old demo. They were DC-based, saccharine pop-punk, mixing up the tempos a bit but always dance-paced. The vocals are a bit nasal/snotty at times, but they're too sweet to be mean. They fit snuggly into the "de-clawed SCREECHING WEASEL" pop punk scene, or did. ($2 ppd. 11 song cassette, no lyrics included. PO Box 2181, Bloomington, IN 47402.)(Erin)

DA CAPO has moments of sounding like the more balls out SNUFF songs (same kind of speaking/singing/yelling vocal combo, with accent), sometimes sounding like one of the crossover hardcore bands from the mid-80s (wanking guitar bits that come out of nowhere, and power drive pacing). That makes no sense on paper, but they totally pull it off, and rock you while they're at it! (7 song CD, no lyrics included. 13 Lon Penllyn, Rhiwbina, Cardiff, Stu, Wales CF14 6BZ, Great Britain.)(Erin)

DAMEZUMARI plays a mix of poppy and hardcore emo. Their sound sits somewhere between BRAID or THE OWLS and NEIL PERRY. Quiet picked out guitar parts and busy drum work mixes with screaming hardcore. If it didn't sound so modern, I would almost want to say that it sounds like EMBASSY at times. The recording sounds good and the music is played well. It's pretty good, complicated, emo that has enough drive to keep it from being too wimpy. (8 song CD, no lyrics, PO Box 470112, Tulsa, Oklahoma, 74147.) (Pete)

DRATS!!! plays mellow rock stuff that has a tinge of BOBBY JOE EBOLA AND THE CHILDREN MACNUGGETS humor, and a FEZ FATALE range of instrumentation and style. (7 song CD, no lyrics included. 2401 SE Taylor, Portland, OR 97214.)(Erin)

FUCKED UP MESS and **END ME** have a split demo. FUM sounds like a combination of dark hardcore and good quirky European punk like THE EX and their family. The dark hardcore brings a slower pace, straightforward drumming, and the sore throat vocal style. The quirky Euro punk brings the break-it-down instrumental freak out, the addition of bowed string instruments (violin? cello?), non-traditional song structure, and some kind of uplifting mood to the darkness, playing in the ruins sort of thing. All of the EM songs are improvised—a bold move in this pre-produced world. They sound like FUM's influences put in a blender and spit out randomly instead of co-existing in the songs. More freak out parts, more variety in the playing styles, no vocals. ($3 ppd. 4 song cassette [1 by FUM and 3 by EM], only FUM has lyrics. PO Box 10233, Pittsburgh, PA 15232.)(Erin)

GUN KATA is an intense, metal-influenced, technical hardcore band. Their short songs hit you with blast beats and wanky guitar parts, then throw you for a loop with an unexpected time change and hook you with a catchy guitar line. Power violence? Maybe. Anyway, it's pretty darn good. (4 song CD, with lyrics, PO Box 14132, Chicago, IL 60614, www.gunkata.us) (Pete)

THE HOLD send in their second demo, with a press release thing that quoted my last review, but took the negative parts out. Funny! The music is still great, though, with energy and spite framed in ways that seem new and familiar at the same time. This time the vocals are more like NO MEANS NO (their whole range of styles) and also regular hardcore vocal yelling. Still chock-full of quality here. Good work! ($6 ppd. 10 song CD, lyrics included. 1-5562 Bloomfield St., Halifax, Nova Scotia B3K 1S9, Canada.)(Erin)

THE MAX LEVINE ENSEMBLE should be best friends with THE ERGS! Same energy, catchiness, variety, and sounding shallow at first, but then you realize they're singing about more than the cute girl they have a crush on and can't talk to. TMLE is on the sugary side of the genre, and is vocally driven (as opposed to any of the instruments) with lots of switching off and harmonizing. They throw in some horns and keyboards too, and they cover a couple standards on the oldies station. ($5 ppd. 30 song double-CD, lyrics included. P. O. Box 2181, Bloomington, IN 47402.)(Erin)

THE MEAN-AGERS have a lengthy CD-R that seems to be a re-release of 3- to 4-year old songs. The band plays minimalist pop-punk songs. A woman and a man share snotty vocals, which accompany sloppy, up-tempo tunes. Along with the sloppy play, the recording itself is rather poor, making it either very punk or not all that good (I vote for the second). I can imagine that the band would be fun to watch live but the CD gets old pretty fast. (25 song CD, no lyrics, PO Box 1792, Bloomington, IN 47402, www.fmsmprc.com) (Pete)

NO has a combination of schizophrenia and ADD in their style of grindcore/hardcore. Tempos, styles, and moods all switch back and forth so fast my head is spinning. Hard to tell if the drum clicks are starting off new songs or just continuing with the big ol' tornado of the heavy side of the music spectrum. The vocals yell, scream, screech, and probably more. (cassette with no song listings or lyrics included. 385 S. Peter St., Athens, GA 30601.)(Erin)

NOCTURNE FOR A DYING PLANET is a self-described "noise band." What I think, though, is that they're more like a soundtrack band that contains the story-telling arc in its songs. A couple songs are *long* (over 10 minutes!) but those I think are the most effective in taking you through a mood, building it up, and then ending it. The shorter songs are more like noise bursts, but not like grindcore. The vocals seem to be samples, but maybe that's just the

style of the people in the band. I admit I wasn't looking forward to what I assumed would be a typical "noise band," but I always enjoy thinking about the creation of mood through sound. Beautiful packaging, too. (7 song CD, lyrics included. 385 S. Peter St., Athens, GA 30601.)(Erin)

PEACE OF MIND plays lengthy, emoish punk songs. The first two songs have musical similarities to bands like HOT WATER MUSIC (though not as much drive). The vocalist on the other hand has a somewhat deep, shaky voice that sounds similar to that of Siouxie. The last two songs are faster, dare I say more punk songs, with an almost crusty hardcore feel and much more straightforward vocals. The band is tight and the sound is pretty good, but again, it lacks punch. (4 song CD, with lyrics, www.ihatepeaceofmind.com) (Pete)

PINK REASON plays gothic-tinged punk, or vice versa. The kind of music where you dance by not moving your feet—you just sway with your head down and your long black hair moves more than your whole body. Okay, maybe not you, but you know what I mean. They do it well, with melody and tunefulness. In the mid-80s this would be such a hit on the college rock airwaves.(6 song CD, no lyrics included. 1132 S. Quincy St., Green Bay, WI 54301.)(Erin)

RED ON STRIKE plays energetic UXA-influenced punk rock! Short, strong songs with little guitar flurries that rule. Solid rhythm keeps it driving and fun. The female vocals are sung with spirit—kind of ranting, kind of singing, and sometimes pissed, but all singing. ($3 ppd. 5 song CD, no lyrics included. 14275 Close St., Whittier, CA 90604.)(Erin)

PEACE OF MIND plays lengthy, emoish punk songs. The first two songs have musical similarities to bands like HOT WATER MUSIC (though not as much drive). The vocalist on the other hand has a somewhat deep, shaky voice that sounds similar to that of Siouxie. The last two songs are faster, dare I say more punk songs, with an almost crusty hardcore feel and much more straightforward vocals. The band is tight and the sound is pretty good, but again, it lacks punch. (4 song CD, with lyrics, www.ihatepeaceofmind.com) (Pete)

THE SKUDS like thrashing it up, and they like to add metal tinges to their punk. The vocals are early-MDC-ish mixed with more shouting, and the backups are traditional deep throat. ($3 ppd. 6 song CD, no lyrics included. 804 Ellis St. Apt. B, Augusta, GA 30901.)(Erin)

THE STEAK KNIVES, who call themselves THE UNABOMBERS in their home country of Sweden, play lo-fi, poppy punk songs. Their sound is close to that of the early QUEERS records. Snotty vocals are sung over up-tempo, three chord punk songs with an element of pop. Altogether it's catchy but still has an edge. Not new but still fun. (4 song CD, with lyrics, www.theunabombers.tk) (Pete)

TAEVE is a Danish band that plays straight-up punk, which is influenced by the early 80s Southern California scene. They bust out solid, up-tempo, three chord songs with aggressive, but still mostly sung, vocals. This sounds like it could have been a long lost Mystic Records release. The recording isn't great but it's just good enough to make this demo worthwhile. (6 song CD, no lyrics, www.taeve.dk) (Pete)

THIS ROBOT LIFE plays basic songs over a range of punk styles. Some are pop-punk songs that musically land somewhere between SCREECHING WEASEL and DISCOUNT. Nasal vocals sing over muted guitars and straightforward, up-tempo drumbeats. Others have a faster, more straightforward punk feel, while still others fall more into the mid-tempo emoish range. Outside of the last couple of songs the recording is very poor, with a dull sound and vocals overpowering everything (especially the poorly arranged backing vocals). The last two tracks may be worth listening to for fans of HOT WATER MUSIC. (10 song CD, with lyrics, 4110 North Woodburn St., Milwaukee, WI 53211, www.thisrobotlife.com) (Pete)

WOLFGANG BANG bring on another demo of simple and slow punk rock, with a mix of spoken vocals and nasally singing . The vocals are really loud in the mix, so it's hard to tell what else is going on. Seems heavy on the rock side of punk rock, though. (6 song CD, no lyric sheet. 1061 E. Broadway, Suite 201, Long Beach, CA 90802.) (Erin)

TOXIC REASONS

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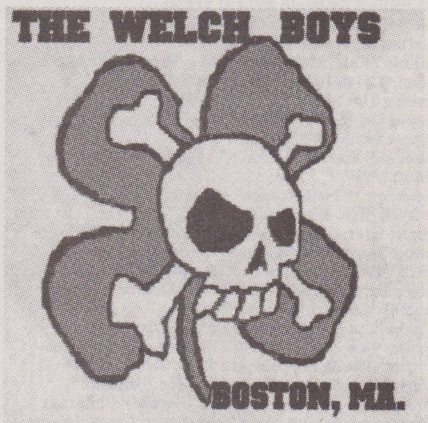

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Murder Can Be Fun zine #13 $1.50 (Death at Disney)
Murder Can Be Fun zine #16 $2 (Zoo Deaths)
Murder Can Be Fun zine #17 $2 (Naughty Children)
Murder Can Be Fun zine #18 $2 (Sports Tragedies)
Murder Can Be Fun zine #19 $2 (Musical Mayhem)
Murder Can Be Fun "Anti-Sex Tips for Teens" $1.50
Scam zine #5 $5
Destrux "Enter The Thrash Kick" 7" $3.50
Kent Brockman/Bizarre X 7" $5
Machetazo/Abscess 7" $5
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Terminal Youth/Fruit Salad 7" $3.50
Demob "If It Ain't Punk It Don't Rock" CD $12
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Disrespect "Justice In A Bag" 7" $3.50
Endless Nightmare 7" $3.50 (ex-Otophobia dudes, dude)
V/A "Hardcore Ljubljana 1984-2004" CD $8.50 (UBR +10)
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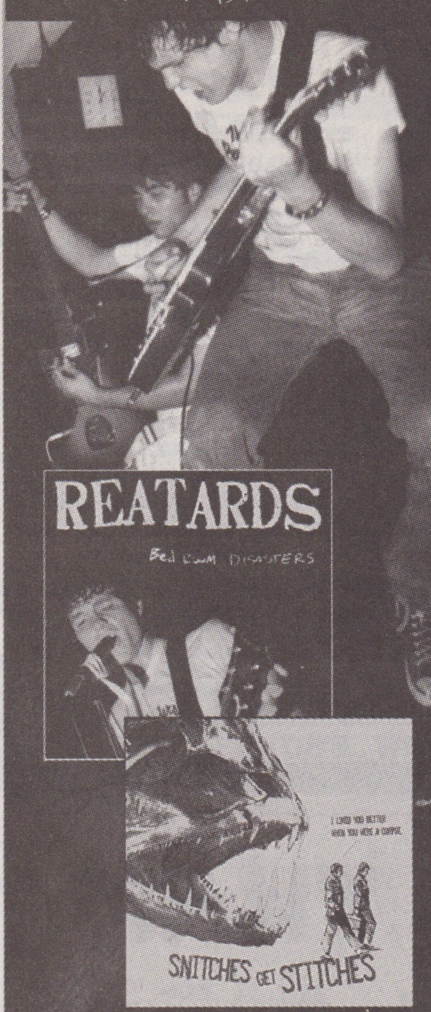

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ZINES

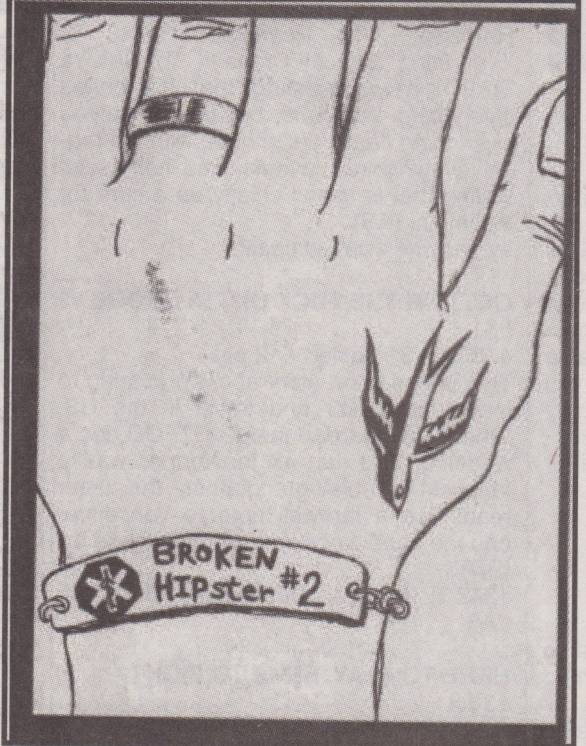
Reviews by: (AR) Aragorn, (JB) Julia Booz Ullrey, (JD) Jip Daems, (MD) Mikel Delgado, (BD) Ben Ditch, (LG) Layla Gibbon, (CH) Cassie Harwood, (HH) Harald Hartmann, (JM) Jeff Mason, (GN) Golnar Nikpour, (CR) Casey Ress, (CQ) Cooper Quintin, (AS) Andy Shoup, (DS) Dionne Stevens.

Please send your zine in for review. Write down any information you want included in the review; method of printing, number of pages, issue number and post paid price. If you want us to include a foreign post paid price, tell us. If you accept trades, tell us. The only information we will include is what you provide us.

ALF IT UP! #1 / $3 w/ tape
4.25 x 2.75 - copied - 64 pgs
This is a one-off zine documenting the life and times of the Alf House, a Vancouver punk house that is no more. The narrative follows the house and its inhabitants from the day of the move in right up until the bitter end. It is a story of friendship and nostalgia. Like all of Juls Generics' zines that I have read, it is also a farewell. Comes with a good mix tape of bands that played at the mysteriously named Alf house before its untimely demise.(BD)
1342 E Georgia / Vancouver / BC / V5L 2A8

ARF #2 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 40 pgs
At first my warped brain thought this would be about Alf because I read it wrong and I got really excited. Nonetheless, the tone is whimsical, so it probably fits the potential I had in mind. What sticks out for me is the interview with the guy who does Bald Cactus (did you know that zine started in '88?), which is both wide in the scope of subjects discussed and actually manages to convey a sense of what this guy thinks, such as urging people to be active in their neighborhoods and not only talk to punks. All too often interviews read like a transcription of a dude party, where everything is either an inside joke or doesn't make sense if you weren't there. (see the interview with Robolint, same issue, for example of dude party) What are we missing from the zine world? Comics! The layout in this zine is chock-full of doodles and it fucking rules! P.S. How many dollars are in a pound? (JB)
Nat & Jim / Arf Zine / 49 St. James Street / Southpetherton, Somerset / TA135BN

AVOW #19 / $2
5.5 x 8 - copied - 44 pgs
This is a "zine tour diary" of the *AVOW* book tour that happened last summer. Now, I have had occasion to watch Monday night football with John Madden, who amuses us with lines like "Players… they just want to play" and "The men are warriors and they're going to war." I must resist the Maddenesque temptation to say that this man is a writer who is going to write. But it is the case. And even though his narrative, detail driven style doesn't necessarily appeal to me, especially when every day on the trip involved drinking beer and breaking toilets with monster shits, I recognize it for what it is. (AR)
1631 NW Everett #100 / Portland OR 97209



BROKEN HIPSTER #2 / $1.50
4.25 x 5.25 - copied - 40 pgs
Kidney failure is a serious problem, and about half of *Broken Hipster* is dedicated to detailing the nine-hour dialysis routine the editor goes through every day. But it's done in comics style, so it is the most fun portrayal of the procedure you're ever gonna see, not that dialysis is fun. Mixed in with this are high and low points from the editor's past. For me, this was more interesting than the medical stuff, but they get the same emotional weight in the telling. In January she got a new kidney; hopefully #3 will continue the story. Recommended for those who like personal comics. The editor asks that you contact microcosmpublishing.com to buy one, so please don't send money to the address below. (JM)
2520 SE 43rd Ave #B / Portland, OR 97206

CRANIAL STRETCH # 2 & #3 / Free, trade, or donation
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 16 pgs
These short zines are a combination of personal writings, band interviews (Voetsek in #2, Vivisuk in #3) and (collage) art. Pretty short reads and nothing too groundbreaking, but all in all pretty nice. (JD)
915 E Stockbridge #3 / Kalamazoo, MI 49001

DIG IT #33 / $6
11 x 8 - printed - 48 pgs - French
This is definitely one of the best fanzines in the world of punk rock. It is always a pleasure to read, and the graphics are way cool. This issue includes lots of record reviews, an interview with the Wonky Monkees, and another interview with the ghost of Sid Vicious, which one does not want to miss. There are also plenty of cool articles including the MC5, Gigs From Hell, Rock Around Fest, Paul Westerberg, and lots more. Check this zine out! It won't disappoint. (HH)
C/o Armadillo / 32 Rue Pharaon / 31000 Toulouse / France
digitfanzine@chez.com

DOLL #212 / ?
8.5 x 11 - printed - 124pgs
Doll is a fairly long running music magazine from Japan that covers punk rock and other forms of rebel rock and roll. Most

issues reprint an interview from MRR, this one is Career Suicide. Other bands interviewed include 7 Seconds, Overdrive and the Street Beats. You also got your record reviews of course. If you can't read Japanese, this is not for you.(BD)
No. 303 Aota Bldg / 3 - 1 – 9 / Kita, Kohenji / Suginami – Ku / Tokyo / Japan

EAST VILLAGE INKY #26 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 36 pgs
A long running zine about bohemian parenthood in NYC. This one details all her vacations with and without children. This isn't really my thing, it makes me think of a hipper women's magazine full of "aww aren't the kids the darndest things" anecdotes. A peek into the life of a comfortable liberal bohemian family. I am sure you already know about this zine, it's pretty well known/widely available, so you probably know whether you want to read it or not.
PO Box 22754 / Brooklyn NY 11202
inky@erols.com

ENERGY DOME #1 / $3
7 x 8 - copied - 64 pgs
This is magazine has a very interesting eulogy. It is for a local resident named Justin Gorman who disappeared in 97 who I was also acquainted with. The tone of this was very respectful and although the turmoil that was central to Justin's life was discussed it was very much in a parallel voice to how cool Justin was. I didn't really know the cool Justin all that well. But the idea of telling the stories of the people around us, especially when they tell their own story so poorly, is a fabulous idea. Justin was misunderstood and didn't have enough time to catch up to his own potential before he ran away. There are a thousand other stories like this in punk rock, politics, and normal life. The rest of this magazine is a reverent snapshot of 80s California punk rock with interviews with JFA, Capital Punishment, and The Haters, a blend of light conspiracy, clowns, magick, and old show flyers. (AR)
1451 N Peach #171 / Fresno CA 93727

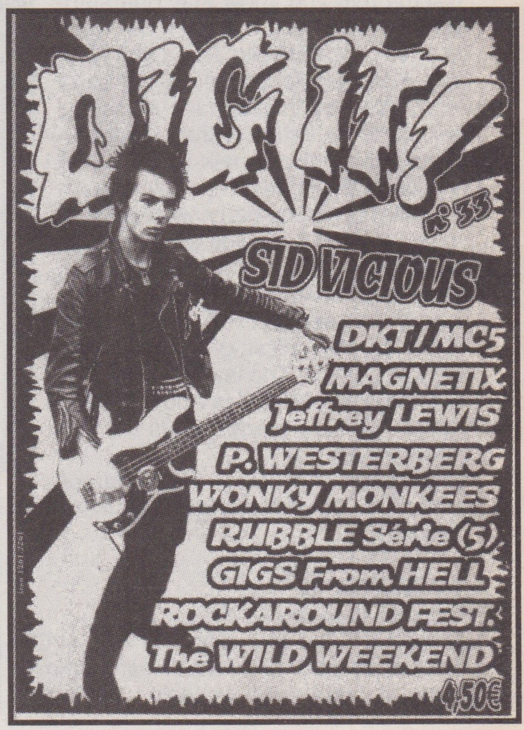
EQUALIZING DISTORT Vol. 4, #7 / $?
8.5 x 11 - copied - 20 pgs
Another strong issue of this hardcore zine from a bunch of Canadian punk fanatics, *Equalizing Distort* features the regular interviews (this time with I Object, Regress, I Accuse, and The Fallout) and reviews, but also serves as a newsletter insofar as it also includes show listings and a "rumor mill." This is my favorite section of the zine—where else would I have learned about all the new releases slated to be released in the coming months or bands ready to do one-off projects? Don't say the Internet! (GN)
91 St. George Street / Toronto, ON / M5S 2E8 / Canada

EVERYTHING YOU HATE #4 / £1
8.5 x 11 - printed - 20 pgs
Everything You Hate comes from Liverpool, UK, and touts itself as "Live Reviews, CD Reviews, News, & Everything Else U Crave 4 To Get Ya Thru"". It's interesting that it's called *Everything You Hate*, because it truly is *everything I hate*. It's printed, with the requisite uninspired layouts, and half-assed writing that is useful chiefly as a cure for insomnia. (AS)
eyhfanzine@yahoo.co.uk

GETTING THE FUCK OUTTA DODGE #2 / $1
4.25 X 3.3 - copied - 12 pgs
This is one short story about preparing to leave Vancouver and travel in the US. Where *Opa* had a funeral, *GTFOD* has a wedding, and just as the former was a farewell to Juls' grandfather, the latter reads like a farewell note to Vancouver and the good times spent in days gone by. (BD)
1342 E Georgia / Vancouver / BC / V5L 2A8

HERE TO STAY, HERE TO FIGHT vol. 2, #3 / $1
8.5 x 11 - copied - 12 pgs
Back in the day, when I started going to shows, an $8 matinee was an opportunity to get punched and otherwise abused by the twelve or fifteen mean skinheads who ruled the floor. Of course, all the skins were totally into NYHC, so when I was exposed to Youth of Today and their lyrics about being nice to people, I wished more local skins were down with that sort of thing. I'd say the same about this publication, "the official info-bulletin of RASH-NYC." (RASH stands for Red and Anarchist Skin Heads, I'm pretty sure.) This installment features write-ups of great lefty skin zines of the past (which they will photocopy and trade with you), some music history, a review of Billy Bragg's autobiography, and their recommended reading list. The back cover is a simple graphic against nationalism, reprinted from the old *Daily Impulse*. Worth a buck if you're shaved for battle vs. the state. (JM)
RASH United / PO Box 364 / Canal St Stn / New York, NY 10013-0364

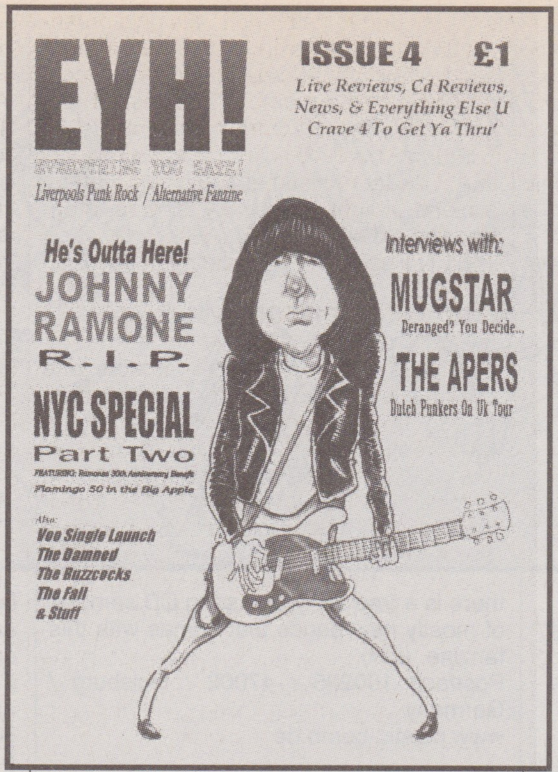
IMPACT PRESS #55 / $2
8.5 x 11 - printed - 64 pgs
If I were an Orlando teenager, I'd probably be pretty stoked to pick up this freebie at the record store. The syndicated columns by Solomon and Hightower are always well done, if short, and the local writers would get A's at community college for material of this quality, which decries television evangelists and your conservative parents. Some academics contribute pieces on overpopulation and animal rights. I'm not an Orlando teenager, and I wasn't too impressed by this analysis. One guy says so many people died in the recent Asian tsunami... because there are so many people. Ya think? The cover piece posits a future "constitutional amendment" abolishing the practice of species-ism. This magazine endorses direct action against labs and such, but is otherwise is safe for liberals. (JM)
PMB 361 / 10151 University Blvd / Orlando, FL 32817
www.impactpress.com



IPRC AUDIO ZINE #1 / $ 10
12 tracks - 70 minutes
I was kind of skeptical when I got this audio-zine in my review box. Part of the charm of zines for me is the complete package. The writing, the layout, the feeling of the paper, the cover art—the whole thing. I was afraid that this audio-zine, which consists of twelve zinesters reading pieces from their zines, would not have that charm that I like so much about zines. I was wrong. Yes, an audio-zine or a zine compilation like this one is completely different from a regular zine, but you shouldn't try to look at it as a substitute for a regular zine. This is more of an addition to regular zines, because you get an extra part added to the experience: the voice of the writer, reading the piece in the way that he or she had initially intended it to be read. I really liked this extra personal touch and most of the stories and ramblings on this CD are really cool and interesting. Listening to this gave me the same kind of feeling as reading a zine and I'm determined to check out some of the zines that were represented on this disc of whom I had never heard. This project was put together by the Independent Publishing Resource Center in Portland and features only zines from that city. Some of the zines you'll find on here are: *On Subbing, Brainscan, Xtra Tuff, Hip Mama,* and *Journal of Ride Theory*. Highly recommended and a cool idea. (JD)
IPRC / 917 SW Oak Street #218 / Portland, OR 97205

THE JUNIPER #3 / stamp
7 x 8.75 - copied - 12 pgs
Most of this is dedicated to gardening, soil quality, etc. It's kind of sad that the editor lived in an apartment in town and didn't even have a garden while putting this issue together. He combines notes from his journal with library research to make this a recommended read for the horticulturists among us. Some recipes and zines reviews finish it off. (JM)
Dan Murphy c/o the Juniper / PO Box 6352 / Boise, ID 83707
www.juniperbug.blogspot.com

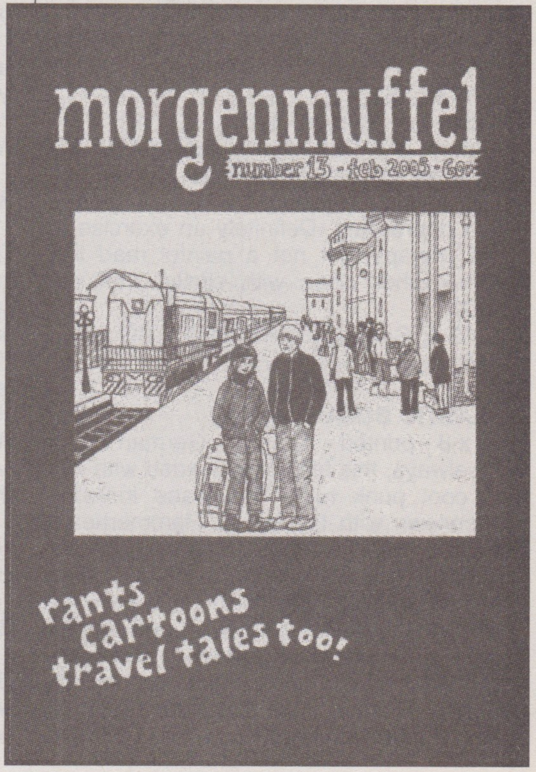
MORGENMUFFEL #13 / 60p
5.5 x 8 - copied - 32 pgs
This is a wonderful travel comic book done by an anarchist woman from the London scene that takes her and a friend all the way—by bus, train and boat—to Korea. It's really wonderful. Her cartoon style is very clean and precise. She balanced her "minds-eye" shots with tons of drawings from snapshots. Her insight and vitality come through every page. There were a couple of other "normal" zine components here (reviews and a couple of regular life snapshots at the end) but the real treasure



is the trip, mostly by rail, of an anarchist across Asia. Cool. (AR)
PO Box 74 / Brighton BN1 4ZQ / UK

MULTI-KID #4 / $1.50
5.5 x 4.25 - copied - 42 pgs
The name about sums it up; multiple kids wrote short narratives, and compiled them to form this zine. I cannot say that I was moved by its content. The quality of writing is acceptable by my humble standards, in that there are no obvious typos or sloppy sentence structure. I was not, however, able to identify a strong enough theme connecting the individual submissions to give them fluidity, and that troubles me as a reader. It felt too random, and the layout fell flat, offering no redemption. In the final pages, three recipes are included, and as much as I like to cook and eat delicious food, I was unable to see how they fit into this issue at all. I have not read any back issues of *Multi-kid*, but I get the impression that these folks could do better, with a clearer sense of direction and more creative effort. (DS)
PO Box 414 / Berkeley, CA 94701

NEGATIVE REACTION / $5
8.5 x 11 - copied - 36 pgs
What I find funny is that in one of the zine review sections of this fanzine, the reviewer refers to the another review section as the "praise section," so I am compelled to be less objective and more critical, as I tend to be slightly self-conscious and am quite often affected by what I read. It's difficult to be critical of a zine of this quality. I do not know much about the Street punk and Oi! Scene/s, and my musical knowledge in that particular genre does not go much beyond Cock Sparrer and Skrewdriver. I have probably not done much investigating into these areas, beyond the obvious good stuff, because I may have naively assumed that most Oi! Bands consist of Nazi skinheads, and are right-wing extremists of some sort—no thank you! Reading this zine, however, has been a positive experience for me personally, to learn a bit about the politics behind the fashion, though many of the perspectives offered by the band members interviewed were apolitical in nature. The editors talk with members of Last Resort, The Legionnaires, Crashed Out, The Business, Stockyard Stoics and then some. Nobody interviewed says any crazy misogynist shit, disses homos, or slanders any other undeserving, distinct minority populations (or perhaps it is just well edited to protect delicate ears)—in fact, there was almost a slant to the left if any at all in most addressed opinions. Once upon a time I went to a town where there happened to be a "Gay Skinhead Weekend" celebration in progress, and I guess at that point I figured that fashion and music were possibly the only defining factors for their using the "Skinhead" title, but beyond that small sense of relief I got from seeing the skins waltzing about, hand-in-hand, openly showing love, I knew no details upon which to base my judgment, so I chose to go on about my



own business, and forego making one. After reading this zine, I am honestly intrigued. Perhaps the Right-Wing faction is but a minority in a large and intelligent group of hard-working, music loving dudes, and birds (I would like to think). I can appreciate the reference point offered by the creators of *Negative Reaction.* The same people that made *Savage Amusement* and *Hagl* composed this piece of working-class work, so if yer already familiar or a fan, you'll jump right at this newest effort…Just curious? This fanzine out of the UK will not disappoint. The interviews are thorough and a-plenty. Everything in between is validated by good humor, and there is even a glossary for shit's sake. (DS)
Gareth Postans / 31A Beaconsfield Villas / Basement Flat / Brighton, BN1 6HA

THE NEUS SUBJEX #60, #62, #63 / $?
2.75 x 11 - copied - 16 pgs
In the dictionary next to concise, there is a mini-issue of this zine, and you need a one legged grasshopper to read it to you and a rat to translate. The print is already so small that you may need bifocals. The read is like a scene report meets internal monologue standing in line to pay a fee of some vicious sort, a seemingly never ending riptide of consciousness, sub or un, conscienceless? I am particularly drawn to the stories, which are less punk zine format (requiring the reviews and the apologies) and more weird writerly mutterings. Cunning and rude, with the times. (JB)
PO Box 18051 / Fairfield, OH 45018-0051

OPA #4 / $1
4.25 x 5.5 - copied - 8 pgs
A short, well written zine dealing with the death of editor Juls Generics' grandfather. For obvious reasons it's kind of morbid and depressing. Definitely an exercise in self therapy, but not a painful read like some other zines with similar motives. (BD)
1342 E Georgia / Vancouver / BC / V5L 2A8

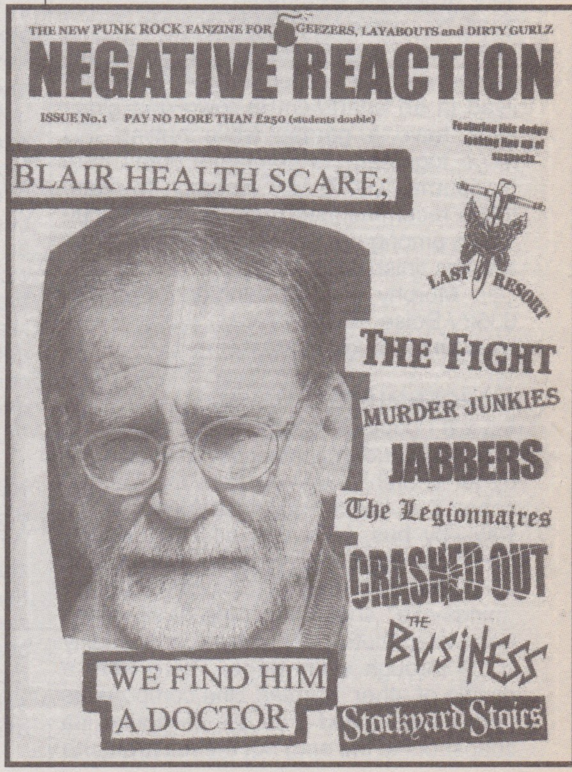
PLASTIC BOMB #50 / $6
11 x 8 - printed - 124 pgs - German
As always, this fanzine is loaded with lots of cool punk rock—this issue includes interviews with the bands Hammerhead, Jimmi Pelz Fistfuck USA, and Zeep's Zoom. There are also plenty of interesting articles such as MP3 downloads, histories of punk in Munich (part two), and Vienna (part one), anti-nazi demos in Duisburg, and a long informative article on George Bush's America. Also there are plenty of new record reviews, and ads. Finally, there is a free thirty-one song CD sampler of mostly new bands that comes with this fanzine. (HH)
Postfach 100205 / 47002 / Duisburg / Germany
www.plastic-bomb.de

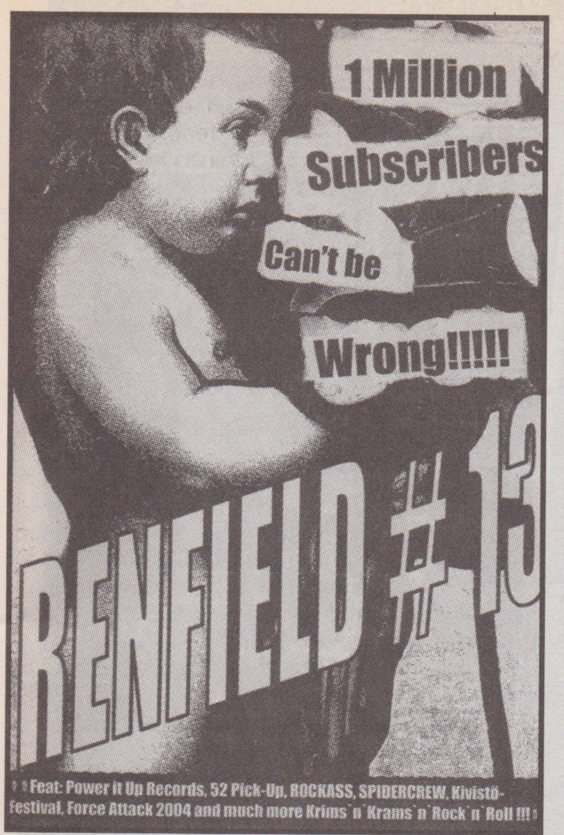
RANCID NEWS #9 / $1
8.5 x 11 - printed - 116 pgs
Really, this zine has everything. I had my brain soup stirred numerous times: once with the Mack Evasion interview, which cracked me up because of the bitterness, once again with Le Tigre interview, which addresses the issue of their new album on a major with finesse (have we been waiting to hear Kathleen talk about how dancing is political?), again with the rant about Punk Voter and its output, or maybe its putterage, also during my trudging through tons of reviews and shit. I was surprised with the quality and quantity! (JB)
PO Box 382, 456 THE / Strand, WC2R 0DZ.

RENFIELD #16 / $3
11 x 8 - copied - 60 pgs - German
There is lots of fun punk rock in this fanzine from the Bear City. Included in this issue are interviews with the bands, Rockass, Spider Crew, and 52 Pick-Up. There are also plenty of new record reviews, some columns, articles, and comics. Also check out live stream trash talk Tim at www.okb.de. Jawohl, Berlin bleibt immer spass! (HH)
Tim Kegler / Danziger Str/ 102 / 10405 Berlin / Germany
Email:studentim@hotmail.com

REST THIS SPACE #3 / $2
4 x 5.5 - copied - 44 pgs
OK, so I hate slagging people's hard work or art, but sometimes it has to be done. A little quarter sized personal zine with general stories about Dylan's life. It's cool that people write and share stories with each other, but we've all read this kind of personal zine. You know, the bad kind. I dunno, this is good for friends and well wishers, it's otherwise pretty forgettable. (GN)
Dylan Haskins / 43 Marlton Demesne / Marlton Road / Wicklow Town / Co. Wicklow / Ireland

THE RISE AND THE FALL #3 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 52 pgs
This "Pedrozine," dedicated to the punk rock happenings in the Minutemen's hometown, is pretty sweet. The layout is sharp, the band and skate photos are well reproduced, the interviews came out fine. There are ads and reviews, but it's fucking free when you find it laying around the LA area. Interviewed are the Red Onions, the Rolling Blackouts, Bob from Aggression, Vadge Moore (ex-Dwarves), part two of the talk with Mike Brinson (he was in the film *Another State of Mind*, and he reminisces and swears a lot here), and a long one with Columbia recording artist Mike Watt. I wish all the editors of shitty free music rags would send this guy two bucks to see how it's done. (JM)
PO Box 1794 / San Pedro, CA 90733-1794
www.theriseandthefall.com





SAL SI PUEDES #3/ $5
11 x 8 - printed - 104 pgs
I think this is the best zine I have read in about five years or so. Seriously. It's hard to write this without seeming corny or trite, but this is what "personal politics" should be, a true meeting of ideas and action and dreams without the whitewash liberal bullshit that clouds most of the safe zines around now. It reads like a conversation, a 3am phone call you still think about five years later. You get a sense of real life/lives/aliveness from its pages; the writing is so visceral and true (and funny as fuck), it evokes tastes and smells. It's a huge zine, with no ads at all, just art and writing, politics and music, family histories. Moments of self-discovery and salvation through art. The idea that politics and art and life are inherently connected and not hobbies you pick up and drop as you get old. Articles on PCP, Valerie Solanos, Bukowski, Patch Adams, copyright infringement—life in east LA courses though each piece...and that tidy little contents list doesn't really explain this zine adequately, seriously just send the five bucks in, I can't recommend this strongly enough. This is punk as fuck. (LG)
City Terrace / PO Box 227237 / Los Angeles CA 90022
salsipuedespv@hotmail.com

TORD-BOYAU #1 / $3
8 x 6 printed - 36 pgs - French
This small fanzine describes itself as punk meets the bicycle. First the fanzine starts out on some reflections on the bicycle and what it means to be a rider. There are some great photos of punks with their bikes. This idea is probably worth a gallery photo show at some point. And the fanzine closes with an article about a critical mass in the city of Angers. If you are a fanatical biker be sure to give this fanzine a look, it is inspiring. (HH)
C/o Xavier Barbarit / 1 Blvd Ayrault / 49100 Angers / France
peste.cholera@wanadoo.fr

TRYING ON HATS #1 / $1.25
4.5 X 5.5 - copied - 32 pgs
Trying on Hats is a zine done entirely by Jennifer Farley of Ft. Worth, Texas. It bills itself as an "edgy perzine," which I guess means it's a personal zine, and also it means that the zinemaker wants to be thought of as edgy. The personal zine is not unlike a gun, or fire: in the right hands, it can actually do good, but all too often, in fact *just about always*, it finds its way into the wrong hands; hands that instead of creating an interesting glimpse into someone's life, give only a window on the depth of the zinemakers sickening self-obsession. *Trying on Hats* features a three page description of the type of cafe patrons that Farley has waited on, and hated, poems by Jennifer Farley, photographs by Jennifer Farley, excerpts from letters Farley has written to her friends, and a list entitled, "Just random thoughts that keep polite society fearful of me." When reading *Trying on Hats,* it reminded me of something that would be written by someone at the community college I went to in Modesto, Ca. I'm not sure what it was. Perhaps it was the slightly silly, cat-lovin', mildly bohemian, but utterly dull and suburban tone of the whole thing, I don't know. But check this shit out: right when I get to the end of *Trying on Hats*, I see this poem, entitled *On the Nerd Who Loves Me*, and at the bottom of the page it says, "Previously published in *Quercus Review: A Journal of Literature and Art,*" Modesto, CA. Weird. (AS)
PO Box 471159 / Fort Worth, TX 76147

VEGAN LOVE / $5
5.5 x 7.5 - copied - 60 pgs
This cook-zine is aimed at those who want to kick ass at reduced-cruelty baked goods and desserts. Lindsey knows baking the way certain nerds 'round here know the history of obscure music scenes. Vegan alternatives to sugar, eggs, etc. are extensively detailed. She includes other recipes for breakfast and dinner, but the specialty here is the sweets. If you just wanna put some food in your face, other such publications will serve your needs better. I think it sucks to be stoked on hydrogenated oil, as the editor is. She says cake, etc. isn't good for you anyway, but it's considerably healthier without that shit. Malt liquor is better for you than margarine! I think the price is partly a reflection of the cardstock cover and more durable pink paper. (JM)
Lindsey Whitaker / 1100 N Damen #2 / Chicago, IL 60622

ZINE WORLD #22 / $3 US, $4 Canada, $5 world
8.5 x 11 - printed - 64 pgs
I liked this a lot. It's mostly zine reviews from all different genres, and even when the reviews aren't too detailed they still fit in a fair bit of information. Almost half of it is devoted to news from the zine scene, school newspaper censorship, the growing police state, etc., along with opinions on what can be done to counteract G.W. Bush's renewed hold on the White House. Also included are a few letters and ads. These non-review pages put this publication at the top of the zine-review zine heap. I did take exception to the definition of "liberal" they run on the table of contents, a quote from Helen Thomas. Nowhere does she mention that, in the US, "liberal" means you think the government can be reformed to fix society's problems, a belief I would characterize as delusional. (JM)
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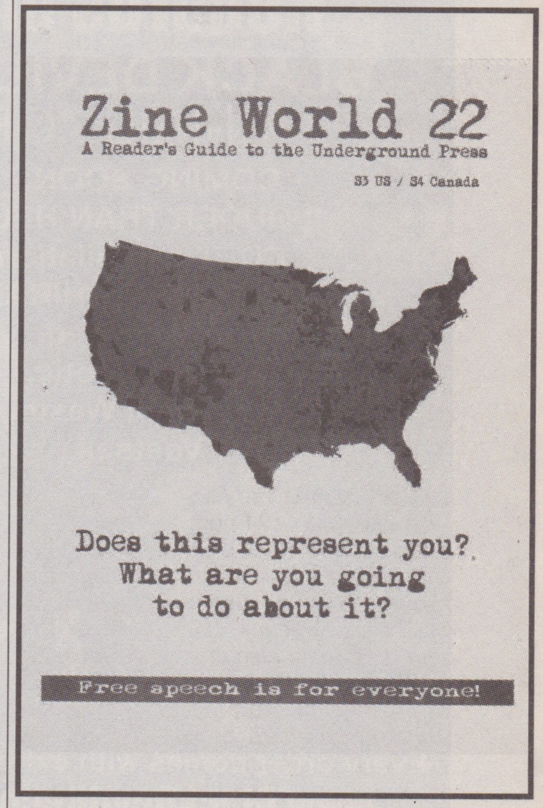

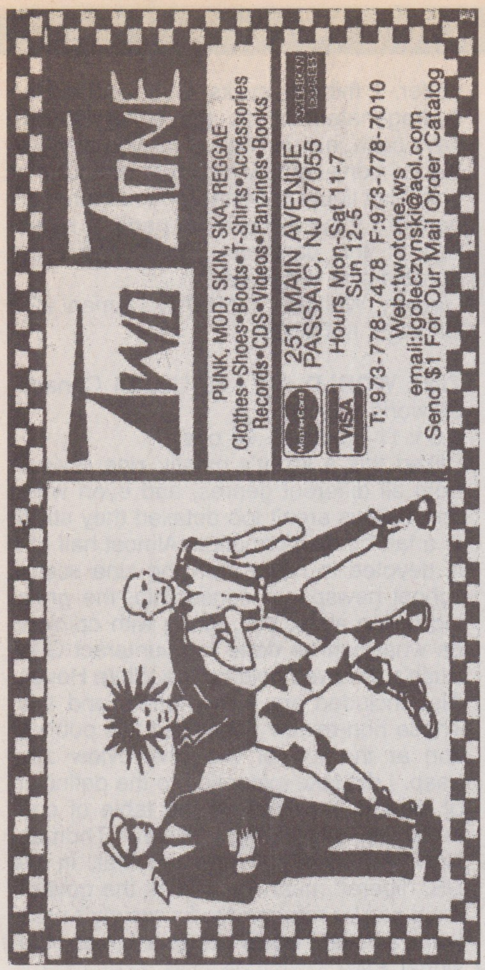
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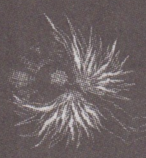

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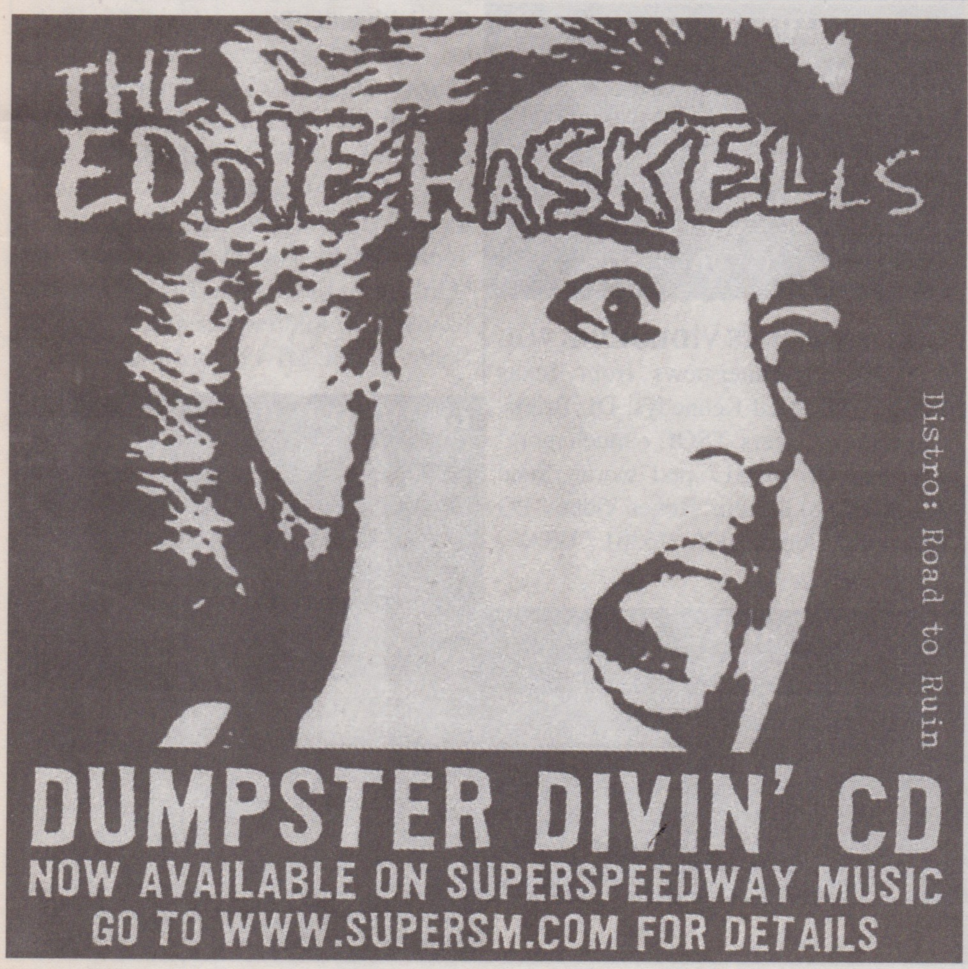

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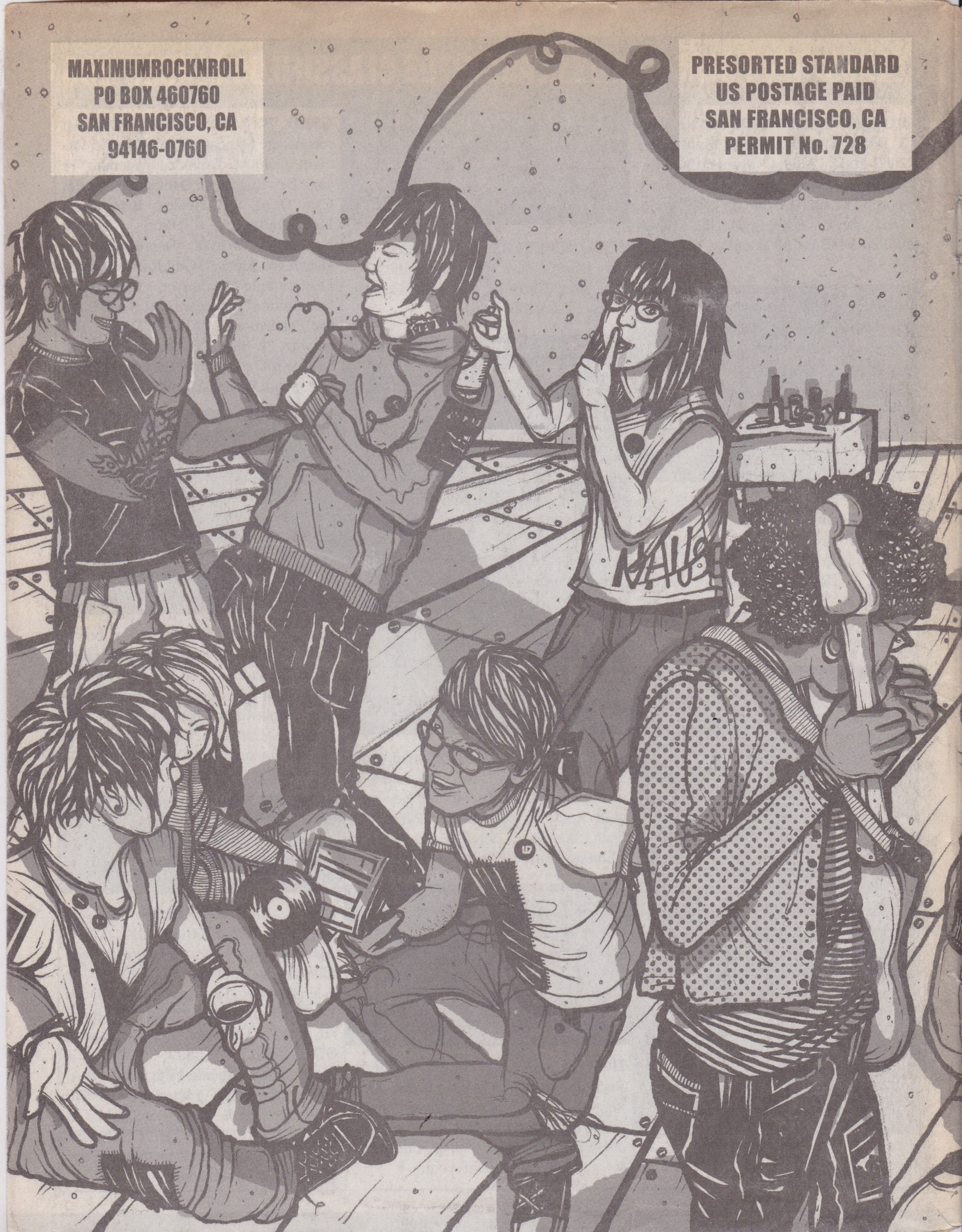
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